# With The Y.M.C.A. in France

HAROLD C. WARREN

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With the Y. M. C. A. in France

# With the Y. M. C. A. In France

*Or*

*Souvenirs of a Secretary*

By

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Introduction by

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*To the friends of the*

*Y. M. C. A.*

*—those who went up and down the land raising funds and all who so generously gave;*

*To "Y" men everywhere, representing the ideals of the Red Triangle throughout the world —in particular those with whom I had the honour of being associated in the work overseas*

# Introduction

I LIKE this readable little book because it goes farther than to show the work of the Y. M. C. A. in France or the life of a Secretary: it gives the reader, over and over again, by the use of anecdote, excellent glimpses of that really marvellous product of the Great War:—the American doughboy. To those of us who were given the privilege to see him in France, he was the most amazing part of the whole "show." His equal was in none of the other armies. He was always finding fault with something or somebody—as a good soldier should do and always does—but he was always cheerful about it: ever original: never without a smile next to the grouch, and the slightest joke ironed out the frown and brought the laugh. Whether he was going over on the transport, back of the lines, in the dugout, in the trench, or within an hour or two of the hop-over, he was always the same: full of fight but

always full of plain American humanness and good cheer that won for him the amazement of his enemy, the comradeship of the Tommy and of the poilu, the confidence of the stricken French peasant and the love of every little child that crossed his path. In fact, wherever there was a child there was also an American doughboy. He was the pal of every little kiddie in France and the fact that neither understood each other's language mattered not: they spoke the universal language of human comradeship and love.

Mr. Warren has done well in showing this wonderful doughboy, for the home-folks cannot know him too well. He has also shown, with proper restraint, how largely baseless was the criticism of the Y. M. C. A. as the American public is fast finding out, and he also proves, with telling effect, because it is done so unconsciously, that the life of a Y Secretary in France was not the job of safety that the unintelligent was led to believe.

EDWARD BOK.

*Philadelphia, Pa.*

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# I

# Soldier Souvenirs

# I

## SOLDIER SOUVENIRS

IT was repeatedly asserted during the fighting in France that the French were battling to save the life and honour of their own country; the British, to retrieve the integrity of Belgium; and the Americans,—for souvenirs. The American soldier is the world's premier souvenir hunter. His prowess has been freely acknowledged.

The Frenchmen could scarcely believe their eyes when some reckless Yank would brave shell-fire and bullets at the front in a dashing attempt to bring in a coveted trophy, which would "look good to the folks back home." They would smile indulgently when our boys stopped their Hun prisoners and went systematically through their pockets for little mementoes. The Americans had a great fondness for the famous German belt, whose buckle boasted the proud legend "Gott Mit Uns," and the deadly Luger automatic. They revelled in the

possession of German camouflaged helmets, canteens, knives, watches—regardless of the extra weight they had to carry. In years they were obviously younger than their French comrades in arms; and in spirit they were thoroughly boys, looking upon the whole grim business as a huge, exhilarating game.

Back in the rest areas and wherever these relic hunters met with less fortunate soldiers who had not reached the front, a tremendous traffic in souvenirs took place. Here one could find, as I did at St. Dizier, immense piles of spiked helmets, and iron crosses by the hundred. Here one would see a doughboy sauntering through a crowded café, quietly exhibiting a German watch in a gas-proof case, offering it to any one who would cross his palm with fifty francs. Belt buckles, helmets, watches, guns, German money, medals—coming in a constant stream back from the front and finally finding their way to the homes across the Atlantic.

Probably one of the most winsome memories among the French in years to come will recall to mind the ever ready smiles and jests and the big-hearted comradeship of these strange American guests. And in their language *souvenir*

means memory. Let us hope that old men and women of France will be bringing out of memory's storeroom and proudly exhibiting to their children and grandchildren these often-fondled souvenirs of their American boy crusaders. An eminent Frenchman has declared that they came to save the life of France, and they behaved as though the French were granting them a privilege in allowing them to do so.

It is no wonder that the French were soon appealing to the American's fondness for souvenirs. It stuck out all over him. Consequently, he heard the word on every side, "Souvenir, Mister, souvenir?" as the street venders urged their wares upon him. When he entered a shop, the girl at the counter would display the article requested and remark discreetly, "Very nice for souvenir?"

For these Americans were notoriously free with their money. They were the best paid army in the world. They were always willing to spend. A French officer, who spoke excellent —even slangy—English, told me with huge enjoyment a story of a Yankee spendthrift. A poilu, he said, went into a jewelry shop in a small town to buy a wrist-watch. The dealer

displayed his assortment of watches, all of one price. The soldier complained that they were *trop cher.* The dealer shrugged his shoulders. The soldier left the shop. Just then an English Tommy opened the door and entered. He had come on the same quest. He grumbled heartily at the price, which he declared exorbitant, but finally bought a watch. Meanwhile, an American soldier had appeared and was looking on as the transaction was completed. While the Englishman was still protesting and was gathering up his change, the American picked up a watch.

"How much?" he demanded. The price was named. He considered. "Well," he said, "that's pretty steep. But I'm game. Give me three!"

These amiable soldiers recognized the virtue of sending home the bulk of their pay. But for the rest, they figured that money should be a means of light-hearted enjoyment. Many a time near the front a doughboy has handed me a whole fistful of money to be remitted to his home in the States. This was a service which the Y. M. C. A. offered the members of the American Expeditionary Forces without charge. Knowing that he could not have drawn

nearly so much in pay, I have inquired as to its source; and invariably the grinning explanation was: "Won it, rollin' the bones."

I recall a typical instance; so typical in fact that its absurdity did not strike me at the time. It was during the drive on the eastern bank of the Meuse above Verdun. There was just one narrow, muddy, cratered road, which had to bear all the constant traffic of French and American truck trains going each way, camionettes, artillery, wagons, motorcycles, infantry, while engineers were working on the road. The congestion brought memories of traffic jams in New York near Forty-second Street and Fifth Avenue. The military police were desperate in their efforts to keep things moving.

Suddenly there was a halt. Everything came to a standstill in great confusion. A big truck had slipped into a shell-hole and would have to be pulled out before traffic could be resumed. Overhead two enemy planes had sighted the mass of men and vehicles and had given their signals. And now, with everybody helpless while the shells were coming with a whizz and a bang, feeling for the road, there was a tense situation. But not tense for the rollicking

American soldier. In the twinkling of an eye, the drivers of the truck train into which I had worked my little Ford were down from their seats and on the ground, snapping their fingers and yelling at the bones, as they lost themselves in their favourite game of crap-shooting.

It was thus that fortunes were won and lost—small fortunes that sounded big when puzzled doughboys undertook to count them up in francs. The French money proved as much a mystery as the language. Many of them returned to America with the intricacies of the dingy, fragile paper notes and the elusive centimes still unsolved. The complaints of three of these demobilized veterans against overcharging on the part of the Y. M. C. A. reached the attention of Mr. Edward W. Bok, of the Curtis Publishing Company. As one of the stanchest champions of the Association, Mr. Bok was interested in the report, and invited these dissatisfied young men to his office. He asked them to tell their story.

"The 'Y' soaked us; they overcharged us," the boys asserted.

"On what?" they were asked.

"Piedmont cigarettes that sell for fifteen

cents here were sold to us at the Bar-le-Duc Y. M. C. A. canteen for sixty cents a package."

Now, it happened that Mr. Bok had recently been to France, and had visited that very canteen; and he also knew the "Y" selling price for Piedmonts. "Are you sure," he inquired, "that you paid sixty cents in American money?"

"No, not in American money; of course not," was the quick reply. "We paid in French money."

"You mean you paid sixty centimes," he corrected. "Five centimes are equal to one cent in American money. And it is a simple problem in arithmetic to deduce that sixty centimes are equivalent to twelve cents in United States coin —three cents less than you pay for the same cigarettes here at home."

And so in old Philadelphia, where there is plenty of time for truths to sink in, these returning travellers apprehended for the first time the lowly position of the French copper "clacker."

A young man who was at a loss with both the money and the language found himself in

difficulty one day in a shop in Bar-le-Duc. Having secured his purchase, he suspected that the girl who had waited upon him had not given him the right amount of change. His attempted explanation by means of gestures proving futile, he walked to the doorway in despair. He accosted another Yank who was loitering there. This soldier, when questioned, confessed a slight acquaintance with French—"enough to get by." He was invited to help his comrade out of his difficulty. Willing to oblige, and swaggering with the pride of his learning, he approached the mademoiselle.

"Parlez-vous Francais?" He innocently asked the French girl whether she spoke French!

"Oui, monsieur," she replied with a smile.

"Well, then, why the hell don't you give this fellow his change?"

The boundless patience of the French and the inexhaustible good humour of our own boys were both called upon, whenever a soldier from the States asked to be directed to a locality whose French name he disguised with American pronunciation.

I had not been two days at my first post in

France when a group of signal corps men walked into town from a village four kilometers distant. They asked me to send some writing paper and canteen supplies to their comrades, indicating that they were "just up the road a piece." I asked the name of the village. They attempted it. Each achieved a different result. They looked at each other and then at me in bewilderment.

"Well, anyway, it's right up the road. You can't miss it, you know. And say! You'll see the name of the place on the sign-board when you get there."

The same difficulty presented itself when, stopping my car one day in a town with which I was not familiar, I hailed some roadside soldiers and inquired its name.

"Don't know, Bud," one of them called back, "we've only been here two weeks."

And yet these Americans endeared themselves to the French. There are languages other than words; universal languages. One is music. Another, ordinary human impulses. The evident good nature of these foreign crusaders, their easy-going ways, and the souvenir habit were put to advantage by the poilus and the

young men and boys of the streets, who did not hesitate to ask for American chocolate and American cigarettes, adding with an ingratiating smile, "For souvenir!"

They always got their souvenir. The American boy is generous to a fault,—unaffectedly, whole-heartedly. I have seen him when wounded give his share of chocolates or cigarettes to a stricken poilu, or to a black-faced French colonial, or even to a wounded German prisoner, whom he considered more seriously injured than himself. But what is more remarkable, I have seen him when in the best of health and high spirits, share his last crumb with some one less fortunate. In a troop train, on which I was travelling, there were soldiers suffering from hunger because they had given away so much of their rations; and even then, they had to be sternly dealt with by their officers to prevent the distribution of what little remained among some gaunt and wretched Frenchmen at the stations on our route.

This journey carried the men with whom I had entrained from their reserve positions to their places on the Alsatian front. Here came their first days in the danger zone, their first

acquaintance with the trenches. Their very voices and bearing revealed their relief, now that they were at last going to show in actual fighting the results of their training and pent-up enthusiasm.

The night of their first air raid, which happened to be accompanied by a general bombardment all along that front, threw them into great exuberance. It really sounded as though somebody had started something in that quiet sector. I am sure that every one earnestly prayed that it might be so. At any rate, it aroused an interest and activity which could not have been surpassed a few weeks later, had they been entering upon a tremendous drive. At Division Headquarters the officers hastened pell-mell to their posts for news. It was commonly reported that a certain colonel appeared in his pajamas, but wearing boots and spurs; and the general caustically inquired where he had left his belt and sabre. The men stood alert, wearing helmets and gas masks for the first time; serious, but unafraid, as the bombs burst and the rockets flared. But when one plane swooped low over the housetops and began to machine-gun the streets, then pandemonium

broke loose, as the boys recklessly opened fire with rifles and automatics.

Shortly after this a big German shell whined its way to a village some distance behind the lines and tore through one of the barracks. It was the first of our casualties in any number. It revealed the stuff that was in the boys, never to fail them in the terrific days to come. The wounded bore their pain heroically, without a murmur, excepting one poor fellow who lived but a few minutes and kept calling for his mother.

In a few weeks they were veterans. Shell-fire and death were part of their daily lives up there on the Meuse above Verdun. They appeared to look upon it all with a whimsical humour which assured one that down underneath they had settled once for all the serious things of life. They had committed themselves to the unwavering fulfillment of their duty, come what might. When I saw a doughboy sitting on a log out there in the woods, calmly cleaning his automatic amid a continuous, increasing rain of shells, I felt a desire to send his picture home. The utter indifference to danger would, I knew, have brought pride to the hearts of all his coun-

trymen, as it did to mine. When the firing became suddenly more intense, he glanced thoughtfully up towards the trees, where the "G. I. Cans" were crashing. He held up his automatic and addressed it: "Mr. Gat, you are clean! Something tells me it is time to leave. Now come with me." And, slipping it into the holster, he strolled unconcernedly towards a safe-looking dugout.

The same apparent nonchalance was exhibited by a friend of mine who was sitting one morning on the edge of a funk hole, in which he had spent the previous night. He was calling to another doughboy, appearing from a similar hole near by. The firing was particularly heavy, and the air seemed full of the explosions of invisible, whirring, shrieking things. Yet this is what he was calling: "Say, Bill, how are you off for cooties? Guess I know now why these French people are always shrugging their shoulders. Guess maybe this explains all those pictures of Napoleon with one hand shoved inside his shirt."

And within an hour there was an advance, and he was helping to clear the woods of Germans, singing as he fought his way along:

"They go wild over me; they go wild, simply wild, over me!"

At one time in this region our line and the German line were so close together that our artillery did not dare send over the clearing barrage, which should precede a new "hop-over." There was a lull in the steady pounding of our guns. Upon inquiry we learned that our infantry were being allowed ten minutes in which to draw back a certain distance before the heavy firing should begin.

Lieutenants Stewart and Connelly, in charge of the battalion's first-aid station in which I was serving, promptly gathered their equipment; and I selected a blanketful of chocolate, cigarettes and cakes. During those ten minutes, as the doughboys were scurrying back through the woods, we with a few others hurried up to an advanced dugout, only recently abandoned by the Germans. There we set up our combined first-aid station and "Y" canteen,—really for a while in No Man's Land.

Then came the barrage. I had read of barrages in which no one could survive, if exposed above ground, but had believed it an exaggeration. The thunder of this rain of shells from our

own guns, and the havoc they wrought as I peered from the doorway of our shelter, convinced me. It gave new colour to the exclamation of one of the prisoners our boys had recently brought in: "If you think the war is bad here, you ought to be across those hills where your own shells are falling!"

After the barrage came the infantry; and immediately the wounded began to trickle down to our underground station for treatment.

But they failed to make any substantial advance and finally fell back to their former line of dugouts, of which ours was one. Up there in the woods there were no trenches; the front line consisted of a series of dugouts. So it was that we found ourselves apparently helping to guard the front line of that sector, held by the Third Battalion of the One Hundred and Fifteenth Infantry; our only ammunition, gauze and bandages, scissors and "hypos," chocolates and smokes and biscuits.

It was in this position that we were cut off from the rear by German firing. The stretcher bearers could not get through for our wounded. The carriers could not bring food and water. We got along on bread and Karo syrup. The

entrances were sealed against gas, so the air was bad; the life was uncomfortable, we were hungry and dry and glum.

As we were making one of our attacks on the bread and syrup, there was a shout from one of the boys, who came quickly to the table and produced before our greedy eyes an unopened can. Off in a dark corner he had come across a great find—a tin of creamery butter. Very comically he threw his handkerchief over his arm, bowed to the lieutenant, and asked, "How'll you have your eggs, sir?"

This irrepressible young man, with his constant good humour and drollery, saved the situation. We never tired of starting him upon a narration of his life history, which could inspire mirth in even the most dismal of us. In characteristic fashion, too, he would contend that, whatever others might say about the comparative beauty of French girls and Americans, he had seen some mighty pretty mademoiselles. "The best of them all was down in Grandvillars, in Alsace," he declared. "She worked in a café there. Two sisters, there were; but this one was handsomer than the other. What did she look like? Well, sir, she was a blonde and in-

clined to be stoutish, and just the least leetle bit cross-eyed."

All this was at the time when the false rumours of peace were circulated some days before the armistice was actually signed. The dashing of their unfounded hopes was a great test of the morale of our men. Among the artillery there was a desire to get into Germany and throw shells into their untouched cities. The infantry, however, at closer grips with the enemy, were not so keen to retaliate for the wrongs done to the cities and countryside of France. They wanted a victorious peace, it is true; but they yearned for the end of the war. Up there where the air was alive with death, where misery was their constant companion, the rumour of an immediate surrender by the Germans was welcomed. They prayed—yes, I heard them actually pray—that it might be true. And that night we distinctly heard cheers and singing and the noise of locomotives and trains from the German side. In our imagination, we could see the enemy rejoicing at the news that war was over, and some of them already starting for the rear.

But there proved to be still some days of

costly fighting before the Hun capitulated. The next morning, bright and early, those boys were called upon to go over the top again. Knowing that the end was near, those last advances and sacrifices of life, more than anything else in the campaign, were a test of the loyalty and courage of the American doughboys.

And how did they take it? I was there and saw them as they left their shelters and started forward through the woods. Shaken in morale? Not a bit! Masters of themselves and, they proved, of the enemy. The same old courage, the same old dash, as they set forth amid the racket of raining death and were lost from view among the trees. They continued the advance.

The French on our right had failed to straighten the line, so our men were flanked by a raking fire from the German artillery. The enemy held a commanding hill over there on our right. I had been, just a few hours before, with another unit of our division, so situated that I could see the explosions of our own shells, which came screaming over our heads and burst among the German works on the hill. But the men down in the woods did not know that it was a cross-fire from these German positions

which was cutting them down. They were pitiable in their belief that it was our own artillery falling short. There is supposed to be nothing worse for the morale than such a conviction. All of us who knew the real source of the deadly firing did all possible to contradict the report. Nevertheless it spread. But did it dampen the ardour of those young warriors? Not a bit did they slacken. Nor were they even bitter in their blame of their own gunners. Rather, they were concerned for them. Indeed, one of them I heard exclaim: "Say, it sure will be hell, the way those poor guys will feel, when they hear they've been killing their own men."

These were the boys whose courage never broke. One of them came down the steps of our first-aid station, his right arm hanging limp. An examination showed that his arm had been cut from the shoulder by a piece of shrapnel almost as neatly as it could have been done by a surgeon; and it seemed to be hanging simply by a shred of the deltoid muscle. The doctors bound him up as best they could. He should have been rushed to the rear, but the terrific firing had made it impossible for the stretcher bearers to get to the front. Through the long,

dark hours he lay there on a hard board bench. We were not expecting him to survive the night. What was our astonishment when, the next morning, the stretcher bearers still failing to come, he calmly arose, climbed the steep steps of the dugout entrance, and picked his way through all the dangers and rough going of the woods, till he came to the dressing station, where an ambulance was loading. He climbed in and went on to the hospital.

One cannot overstate the heroism of the men of the Sanitary Train. The fidelity of the medical men, stretcher bearers, ambulance drivers, to their duty, their rugged endurance of hardships, their tender concern for their patients, are memories that will always live with one who was privileged to work with them at the front. As the doughboys put it: "We used to call 'em pill-rollers, but now we sure have to take off our hats to those ambulance boys."

In an extraordinary bombardment, which had driven us all under cover, one of these litter-bearers was seen running for our dugout. He had just helped to bring in a wounded man. He slid down the steps and, throwing his arms about the neck of a friend who sprang to catch

him, started to sob as though his heart would break. In a jerky voice he got it out: The shell had landed very close; it had killed and wounded a number of men, one of whom he had helped to carry in; and it had buried alive two of his comrades, who belonged at that same dressing station. The horror of what he had just witnessed was in his voice. Then, pulling himself together, despite the restraining hands, he raced out again into the hail of flying missiles, to return and help dig out the unfortunates.

Leaving this station one morning, I was driving my Y. M. C. A. Ford along a narrow, slippery road, right behind an ambulance loaded with wounded, two of them on stretchers, the rest sitting up. The road was under heavy shelling. We wasted no time.

As both cars were hurrying along, I heard a sudden whizz, and a bang that seemed to rock the landscape. Before my eyes the rear of the ambulance was torn off by the explosion. Every one of the wounded men inside was struck again by fragments, and three were killed outright. The man sitting in front with the driver was hit. The driver himself happened to be leaning forward to change gears, and so escaped the piece

of iron that buried itself in the back of the seat behind him. But he never slowed up for a moment. On he drove with his wrecked car and ghastly load. One man had lost his head and one arm and shoulder; and the torso with spraying blood hung over the side, to the horror of every one we passed.

We had covered some distance when there was a muffled report, and one of the ambulance tires blew out. The shrieking and bursting shells were a warning that flat tires should not hold any one back, if he considered his own life. But that driver had no thought for his own safety. He cared only for what he believed to be his duty. The car stopped, and out he jumped, and began to jack up the wheel. Some hurrying soldiers helped convince him that we were not in a healthy place for changing tires; and soon he was again on his way, speeding his pitiful load to the nearest dressing station for relief.

The best one could say of these faithful workers is that they were worthy of the wounded heroes whom they served. For surely those wounded Yanks were magnificent. Suffering untold agonies, which they kept behind

their white, tight-pressed lips, they have thanked me most carefully for lighting a cigarette, or courteously expressed their appreciation for some other slight service which I was proud to render.

And everything was all right—always. When crowded conditions forced us to lay them on their stretchers outside in the mud, under the open sky, exposed to all the perils of the terrifying missiles that flew through the darkness, they only smiled and understood. It was all in the game, they said.

One poor fellow was carried in with his leg smashed and half of it hanging to one side of the stretcher, a wound in his neck, and a bullet-hole in his forehead. He talked rationally and distinctly and bravely. I offered him a cup of hot chocolate. He attempted to sit up. He seemed to reach for the drink; but, throwing out his arm and knocking the cup from my hand, he screamed: "Come on, boys; we've got to get that machine gun." And then he died.

Further back in the hospitals I had found them with the same American grit, the same ever-ready American smiles. There was a general agreement between the Y. M. C. A. and

the Red Cross that the latter was to have exclusive charge of the wounded men after they had reached the hospitals. We were permitted to visit them, however, after consulting Red Cross authorities, or in localities where the Red Cross had no representatives. Consequently, in Alsace, I often ran my car out to a beautiful little château, situated on a charming estate, which Madame had converted into a hospital. Here the patients were mostly French. Some of them were black-faced colonials. I had seen a great many of these poor dark-skinned creatures, as they manfully, silently bore their wounds. Never a word from their swollen lips, excepting an occasional "Merci, monsieur," as we sought to ease their pain. Here in the hospital, however, they were always frolicking and joking. One irrepressible humourist caused great merriment as he continually grimaced and protested because I spoke to his nurse in English, which he could not understand.

There were a few American wounded here. They were lonely. They longed to be sent to an American hospital. I never missed running in to see them, for I knew they counted on such visits.

One of them had lost a leg. I had not had time to sit down after shaking hands with him the first day we met, before he had thrown back the bed covers to show me what had happened to him. It was an honourable wound, and his eyes gleamed with pride. It led me to wonder how many of us at home, in whatever lines of service we may be engaged, have scars to which we could point as evidence of our devotion to some lofty cause. I was thinking of all the years in which he would be handicapped, but, of course, tried to say something cheering about his misfortune.

"Oh, yes," he cut in, "I'm all right. Tough luck, you know; but it's in a doggone good cause!"

There were others in his condition at the French hospital at Hericourt, but farther advanced in their convalescence. They were usually to be found laughing and shouting in a rollicking contest with some French *blessé* similarly crippled, as they sought to gain dexterity in the use of one crutch instead of two.

In Paris I had seen them at a big base hospital. Taking advantage, as I often did, of the generosity of some friends in America, who had

provided me with an extra fund to be used, when occasion arose, for little delicacies for our boys, I took out in the taxi a suitcase crammed full of milk chocolate.

Their gratitude so thoroughly boyish, their courageous bearing, and their concern principally for the anxiety of those at home, were very touching. I remember now the lump that was in my throat and the effort I was compelled to make in order to match their cheerfulness, as I chatted by some of the bedsides.

There was the lad with seven machine-gun wounds in his arm. "The only thing that saved me," he said with a laugh, "was—they ran out of ammunition before they reached my neck." Then he hurried on to tell me, as if he had been describing a football game, how he and his comrades had crept up on some enemy machine guns. The Germans were in a depression, and the rolling ground gave our boys such an advantage that they had the Huns firing helplessly overhead. Seeing that ordinary means were failing, the enemy then sent over some aeroplanes, which swept low and raked our men with their machine guns.

"Then what did you do?" I prompted.

"Oh, we just flopped over on our backs and let 'em have it with our rifles!"

Across the ward was that pathetic case of the fine young man who had had three vertebræ splintered by a bullet. (They were all shrapnel and bullet wounds—on our front at least, the Huns had rarely dared to engage in bayonet fighting.) This boy was paralyzed, of course; but confident and smiling. He had partially regained control of his left arm; and with the deliberateness of great concentration and nervous effort, he slowly raised it and gave me a stiff left-handed salute. It was a great joke! Everybody in the ward laughed. I managed to smile. But my heart was full for the poor fellow, and I hastened back to my room to write a hopeful letter to his mother, back in Reading, Pennsylvania, concerning his truly remarkable improvement.

So you have the young American crusader. Bubbling over with crazy jests, sometimes crude, yet considerate and easily touched. Brave and stubborn and grimly enduring hardship and racking pain and death; yet always with a flitting smile that speaks of duties well performed and a heart that is content. Memo-

ries—souvenirs—gay and sad, that I cannot and would not lose.

When shall I forget the first of our boys whom I found dead on the field where he had fought? Dead! It could not be. The breeze was gently tossing his glinting hair. His honest blue eyes were wide open, with little good-natured wrinkles at their corners. His faithful rifle still clutched in his hand, and with an expression of unflinching valour and a seeming readiness to smile, he lay gazing into the western sky, where the sun was slipping below the crests of the hills. And westward he sent his message to the dear ones at home, who waited for word of him: "I have fought the good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith."

# II

## Service Souvenirs

## II

## SERVICE SOUVENIRS

THE souvenirs which I have brought home from these days of strenuous work under fire have made the earlier memories seem dreams of the remote past. One almost forgot, in those all-absorbing hours at the front, that he had ever known any other life, or that his experiences in France had had a definite beginning or approach.

It is a long look back to the time I sailed from New York, after speeding across the continent from the Pacific Coast to enter the Y. M. C. A. overseas service. This was at the period when our coastwise shipping was threatened by the Hun raids, and the general anxiety over submarines had been increased for ocean travellers.

I had been presented with a newfangled life-saving suit. I had no desire to wear it, but as I was visiting on Long Island just before the

date of sailing, we went down to the Sound to give it a trial. I pulled on the billowy suit and waded out. Either the suit was wrong, or my management was wrong. At any rate, my feet came to the surface and my head was lowered. I attempted to call the attention of the watchers on the shore to the fact that the suit was not behaving properly; but they thought I was calling for help. Some one shouted to the chauffeur to throw me a rope. Being a Swede, and taking it literally, he ran to his car, snatched a rope, hastened back to the shore, and actually threw it to me, releasing altogether his hold. Had I needed it, this would have left me in a bad way. As it was, the absurdity of it all nearly choked me as I paddled towards land.

On the ship was a man who possessed one of these life-saving devices. He was the butt of the boat: tall and lanky, sadly needing a haircut, his only semblance of uniform a pair of disreputable puttees into which he had tucked his baggy trousers. He had in some strange way been delegated as one of the countless "special investigators" who at that time were crowding over to Europe as though the war could not have been carried on without them. He had a

forbidding scowl and made few acquaintances. But he had, as I say, this outfit, upon which he depended to save his life in case of a submarine attack. The contrivance was never left out of his reach. He even used it at night, he declared, as a sleeping bag. As he was exhibiting it one day to a fellow-passenger there came to view from a capacious pocket a huge, long-bladed jack-knife. Pressed for an explanation, he avowed that this was to be his protection against any unfortunates in the water who might appeal to him for safety. He had to stand for a great deal of sarcastic chaffing from the men in the smoking-room, some of whom contemplated throwing him overboard upon arriving at Bordeaux.

As always on shipboard, there were just enough unusual and interesting passengers to help the others through the monotony of the voyage. We had, too, our French classes, conferences of Y. M. C. A. and Red Cross workers, and entertainment furnished by the abundant talent on board. There was Dr. Walter Damrosch, in Y. M. C. A. uniform, on his way to France to organize an orchestra for the entertainment of the American Expeditionary Force.

There was the Princeton Quartette, enlisted in the " Y " service, whom I met again when they came to entertain our division in Alsace. We made frequent visits to the American soldiers who were living below in miserable quarters, and enjoyed meeting with a number of Belgians who were returning to carry on in their own land, after two years' fighting in Russia.

As we were idling up the Gironde, nearing Bordeaux, one of these Belgians went overboard. I have never seen a prettier dive than was made by one of our naval ensigns, as he ran from the doorway of the promenade deck and cleared the railing. He rescued the Belgian; but evidently against the will of the drowning man, who shot himself soon after our landing.

It was a remarkably short trip. *La Lorraine* was not encumbered with a convoy, and evidently speed was her main reliance in the matter of submarines. But the guns were ready always, and so were the gunners. Having slept on deck, because of the stuffiness of the staterooms with closed port-holes, and waking with a start as the nightmare of a torpedo shattered your peaceful slumber, you were reassured as you saw, be-

tween you and the rosy east, the dark, sturdy figure of the sailor ever alert by his gun.

Then came the swift trip from Bordeaux to Paris, enlivened by flitting glimpses through the windows of the tremendous harbour and railroad achievements of Uncle Sam's boys; and by the first attempts to impose the newly acquired French vocabularies upon the defenseless travellers who found themselves locked in the compartment with a lot of relentless linguists.

We arrived in the capital at an anxious time for the Parisians. The Huns were once more within striking distance. Big Bertha was busy. Over a million and a half of the residents had moved their homes out into the country.

Yet the French were serene and sure of themselves. The temporary loss of Paris, they declared, would mean not defeat, but only a deferred victory. They were strong in their determination to defend the city at all costs. The machine-gun positions prepared in the sidewalks were constant reminders of what might be expected. So were the great number of automobiles standing in readiness day after day down near Versailles. The affection of the people of Paris for their beloved city was mani-

fested in the care with which they protected their buildings and monuments against destruction by air raids.

There were five of these midnight attacks during my six nights in Paris. When the *alerte* was sounded, the French made a rush for the *abris;* the Americans for the middle of the streets. They were a noisy, good-natured crowd. One might have thought that Hallowe'en had come on the Fourth of July. The shrapnel would soon disperse the clouds and the full moon revealed the defending captive balloons and aeroplanes, and, coming our way, the flying wedge of Taubes. It was a brilliant sight and thrilling, whenever the search-lights picked out one of the Gothas as a great phantom moth, dodging among the shells which burst like fireflies around it, and coming straight overhead.

Then the crashing of the bombs! Place de Vendome was struck one night. Afterward one of my friends found a taxicab lamp in the middle of his bedroom, hurled there by the explosion. Another evening, when a bomb had started a fire which invited us away from our hotel on the Rue de Rivoli, I started out with Havens, a vaudeville entertainer who had been a shipboard

acquaintance, and reached the scene almost as soon as the fire engines. Our uniforms served to let us slip by the police cordon and into the building.

At the Paris Headquarters of the Y. M. C. A. we attended conferences addressed by Mr. E. C. Carter, Chief Secretary for France, and other officers of the Association. We were refreshed in our ideals of service and received many useful hints as to our future conduct and methods of work. Incidentally we gained a fuller appreciation of the colossal undertaking which this overseas work represented.

Under the direction of the central office at 12 Rue d'Aguesseau there were numerous distinct departments. The Post Exchange branch was engaged in transporting goods from the States to each hut and front-line position. Others looked after the warehouses, the purchasing, the motor transportation, the hut construction, the equipment, the hotels and cafés.

The departments of athletics, education, entertainment, and religious work each had tremendous responsibilities along their own lines. They aimed to follow the American Army with the best features of the American school, home,

stage, and church. The Y. M. C. A. was carrying on the ordinary functions of the American Library Association, the country stores, the moving-picture concerns. It faced the serious problems of the American soldiers' furlough, which they could not spend at home; and at General Pershing's request, it created homelike leave centres at the most attractive resorts and watering places of France.

Then, of course, there was the tremendous and highly appreciated work on our troop ships, and with the French Army, with the Italians, the Czecho-Slovaks, the Chinese labour battalions; and in Russia, Palestine, Mesopotamia, Gallipoli, Macedonia; and the splendid work among the prisoners of war, to which thousands of our soldiers owe their sanity, their very lives, to-day.

Once arrived in Paris, the main concern of every "Y" man was his assignment. After attending conferences, having physical examinations and interviews, the destinations of all our party were announced. Every one, of course, hoped to be sent to the front. Some were physically unfit for the exactions of such a life. Moreover, the work in the large centres, with

their administrative offices, their warehouses, their hotels, their larger canteens, demanded a greater proportion of workers. And too many at the front would have been a hindrance. Those attached to combat divisions were strictly limited in number, and General Pershing provided that additions to the force working with even an under-supplied division could be made only upon written request from the division commander.

The examining physician at first rejected me for front-line work, and sympathetically broke to me the news that I would probably be sent to a port of entry or rest area. In my disappointment I happened to recall that he was a Princeton man. So I cut in on his remarks with the observation that I, too, had graduated from Princeton, and that it was there I had met with the accident on account of which he had formed his decision. I told him my ambition was to get to the front and I wanted his help. Thereupon, as though he had not already done so, he began again my physical examination, and, with a twinkle in his eye, pronounced me fit for any kind of work.

Thus it was that I was assigned to the

Twenty-ninth Division, which had just arrived in France and had prospects of being rushed quickly into action. They were scheduled for a training area in Eastern France, taking in a number of scattered villages, with their headquarters at Prauthoy. I hastened to meet them there. They arrived in the dead of night. Lying awake on my cot in the deserted Y. M. C. A. hut, I could hear the steady tramp, tramp, tramp of the men who were to be billeted at Prauthoy, as they entered the town and were marched to their sleeping quarters. From the sounds which I could catch on the stillness of the night air, I knew that they were a weary lot, who would welcome a chance to rest.

The next morning I became acquainted for the first time with some of these boys with whom I was to live. They hailed from New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. They called themselves the Blue and Gray Division. Recently arrived in France, they had not as yet any Y. M. C. A. secretaries attached. And, as there had been no American troops in that village for seven weeks, the "Y" hut had been nailed up and abandoned. Meanwhile, however, marauders of some sort had broken

in, and the furniture and equipment were badly disarranged, and accumulated trash cluttered the floors. Consequently, for both the newly arrived men and the inexperienced secretary, who had forced an entrance into the hut only a few hours before, the first impressions under such circumstances were decidedly a novelty.

It was not difficult to become acquainted. The men of the Headquarters Troop, billeted in Prauthoy, and men from the near-by Evacuation Hospital Number Five were not backward about coming in and offering their help in cleaning up the hut; and they fairly pounced upon the Victrola and piano and writing-paper. The Paris Y. M. C. A. Headquarters did not reach us with canteen supplies at once, because freight was delayed and they had not known long in advance the intended location of the division. Yet the men seemed satisfied with the advantages offered by the hut; and French classes were promptly organized, and Bible classes; and vaudeville shows, boxing and basket-ball were soon under way. Sergeant " Spike " Webb, the Divisional Boxing Instructor, was very friendly in his coöperation. We did our best with the few supplies we found in the storehouse near by

until our shipments began to arrive. One of these early days of our experience, J. D. Phelps, of San Diego, and I, by means of a wheelbarrow, a dilapidated stove, and a stray case of cocoa, were able to refresh the drivers of a huge truck train as they passed the crossroads just out of town. They had been constantly on the road for three days and were most appreciative. Had they been Frenchmen, we would have been soundly kissed on both cheeks.

During the time we spent in the training area and on the Alsatian front, we of the Y. M. C. A. force attached to the division had ample opportunity to become acquainted with the French people, at the same time that we came to know our own soldiers. In our first location we slept in the little bedrooms of the capacious "Y" hut, washed in a soldiers' bath-house, and had our meals together in a French home of the village. The French civilians were cordial in their attitude towards the Americans. They were frank in their acknowledgment that the entrance of the United States into the war had saved France from defeat—far more willing to confess this than, I fear, we Americans would have been, had the circumstances been reversed.

Charley Lhomme, a French lad of the village, was engaged to help in the canteen work. Probably the proudest moment of his life was when we had him sing the "Marseillaise" at our celebration of Bastille Day. Major Hill, the Judge Advocate of the Division, made an excellent address on that occasion, dealing with the history and spirit of that section of France.

In the home where we had our Y. M. C. A. mess, there was sorrow over the recent report of the death of a son in battle. Yet how they exerted themselves in that household to entertain their American guests and conceal their own depression! One day there was the sound of weeping as we entered for luncheon, and the little sister's reddened eyes betrayed her. But the next minute, seeking to amuse us, she was out under the window playing her fife and singing, "Heel! Heel! The Gang's All Hair!"

The news of the crossing of the Marne by the Germans had so affected the family that they were all in tears again as we entered the next evening; but once more the little girl saved the situation, as she scampered into the room dragging a captive mouse by a string attached to its tail.

It recalled the symbolism of the Paris shop-windows with their warning signs, "*Deuil en 24 Hrs.*" And these windows had been plastered with strips of paper to protect them against the vibrations caused by bomb concussions; yet brightened even by this necessity, for the paper was pasted on in symmetrical and beautiful designs.

A wonderful spirit they had in all their adversities. I remember mentioning in my conversation with a French officer my disappointment at having received no mail from the United States since my arrival in France. He was most polite in his sympathy. Only by accident did I discover that he himself had heard nothing from his family since 1914, when they had fallen into the hands of the Huns.

These unfortunate captives were always considered in the plans of the French officers. They were asked repeatedly why they refrained from making targets of some German factories which were visible from the heights of Verdun. Their reply was always: "No, our women are there. We would rather let the boche have the shells made there to kill us, than to destroy them with the certainty of killing our own women."

And well might they be considerate of the heroic women of France. Their faithful work and their magnificent patriotism were an inspiration both to the French soldiers and to their Allies. When a French woman in mourning was challenged on one of the roads beyond Verdun from which all civilians were barred, the two soldiers who stopped her protested that she should not proceed on her dangerous way. She explained that, having lost already five sons in the war, she had come now to weep over the grave of the sixth. Instinctively the soldiers came to attention. Then raising her head as they allowed her to pass, she added: "*Vive la France, tamens!*"

After only two weeks in the training area, we were transferred to the Alsatian front, east of the interesting city of Belfort. I entrained at midnight. Our rail head was at Vaux, and I made the run there from Prauthoy perched on some roll-ups in the rear of a Ford camionette. So thoroughly did I trust the driving of good old Conklin, one of my best friends in the "Y" work, that as we sped in the dark along unfamiliar roads I fell sound asleep on my uncertain bed. We had started for a train supposed to

leave at two in the morning. We soon learned that it was really scheduled for four-fifteen. It pulled out at six-thirty. I entrained with the 114th Infantry—part of them, that is, for many missed the train. Having started too late, and hiking at too stiff a pace with their heavy packs, they fell from sheer exhaustion in the road, some within sight of the train. Officers were snatched off the cars and sent back to round them up in time for the next train.

The city of Belfort, guarded by Bartholdi's majestic lion which stands out boldly from the solid rock up by the imposing château, had not fallen into the hands of the Germans. Yet one had only to go outside the city limits to find shallow trenches, barbed-wire barriers, and lookout nests; and all along the way to Dannemarie, to the east, the camouflaged roads and ammunition dumps and batteries and the blasted bridges gave mute evidence that cruel warfare had been waged across that countryside, and that, a little farther on, the hostile lines still faced each other across No Man's Land.

Here one did not dare trust the French peasants. They spoke German as readily as French,

Some had sons in the German army. The country was known to be infested with spies. In some sections the inhabitants were openly hostile to our men, and there was considerable sniping. It caused scarcely a passing interest among the French soldiers, when a farmer with whom they had been fraternizing was placed under arrest. It developed that he had been sedulously mowing his field day after day, and over and over, in such a way as to outline an arrow which, to enemy aviators, indicated the positions of neighbouring French works. So ardently did he give away this information that one day he overplayed his part, and the Germans shelled the intended location of a battery before the guns had arrived at the spot.

Generally, however, it was a quiet sector. Only occasionally were things livened up a bit, as after a prank which a few boys of our Thirty-second Division played. Putting their most vigorous sentiments regarding the Kaiser on a sign-board, they stole across and planted it behind the German trenches. They had succeeded in regaining their own lines and were diving into a dugout, when a chance shot from a trench mortar fell into the entrance and se-

verely wounded every one of them. One was a sergeant who had expected to leave the next day for America.

Here for a while I was still attached to one unit of the division; and whenever it moved, I had to find the best place available in which to set up my cot and open a canteen. Usually I found a vacant room in one of the abandoned houses used as billets. Once, in the barracks at Valdieu, conditions were so crowded that I was reduced to sleeping in the room which was used as a prophylactic station. Beneath the barracks was a spacious mess-hall, where the boys were entertained one evening by Miss Rochester, of Seattle, and Mr. Wiederhold, of New York. As there were no available lights, we brought in a motorcycle and used its headlight for a spotlight. And, of course, during a sentimental duet one of the soldiers turned it off. Afterward, late at night, I held the piano and our hard-working driver, "Slim" Weaver, drove the truck, on the bumpy road back to Belfort.

By this time, as a result of their constant association with its secretaries, who were drawn from all walks of life—lawyers, insurance men,

ministers, journalists, farmers, business men—and who, whatever their shortcomings, were eager to serve—the men and officers had become the loyal friends of the Y. M. C. A.

Occasionally one would meet with cranks or disagreeable men in the army, as well as back home. One hot afternoon, I had gone to a little Alsatian town to sell canteen goods from my car to a part of a machine-gun outfit which had been left there, while the rest had gone to the front. At the major's request, our secretary attached to that unit had accompanied those who were stationed up in the line. I was attempting to meet the needs of those left behind temporarily. Beneath a broiling sun, I was handing out supplies to men who waited patiently in a long queue, which stretched away down the road. Some of them had been standing in line for over two hours. In order to make the amount of things I carried on my Ford satisfy as many of them as possible, I was limiting the number of packages of cigarettes, biscuits, and chocolate bars any one man could purchase. Everything was going well, until a captain came along and stepped in at the head of the line of waiting men and demanded that I fill his order

at once. I handed him the same assortment that I had been giving to each of the others. He protested that he wanted to buy more than that. Indeed, the amount he asked for would have lasted him several weeks, and would have exhausted my store. I explained that I could not so disappoint these boys who had been standing in line for over two hours. He insisted that, as he was a captain, he was entitled to all he wanted. I replied that private soldiers and officers had to share alike with the Y. M. C. A. in such circumstances. This angered him, and after blaming the "Y" for removing their permanent secretary—which had in reality been done by his own major—he declared, with a great deal of profanity, that he intended to give the American people his opinion of the Y. M. C. A. upon his return to the States. As soon as he had left, the soldiers declared in no uncertain terms that such selfishness was characteristic of this captain, who constantly bullied them; and they thanked me for refusing to yield to him.

Our secretaries sought consistently to be courteous, but sometimes this was made difficult by the conduct of an unpleasant customer. Such

occasions were rare, however. In one exceptional case which I witnessed a soldier had asked for something which was not carried in stock, and then had attempted by deception to secure more than his share of a depleted supply, preventing some of his comrades from having what was due them. When this was reasonably pointed out to him, he lost his temper and became so abusive that finally he was ordered from the room. All the other soldiers in the crowded canteen made it plain that they sided with the "Y" man, and they urged the offender none too gently out the door.

The post exchange work was taken over by the Association at the request of General Pershing—equivalent to a command, since the organization is a recognized part of the American Expeditionary Forces. It was carried on despite unforeseen handicaps in inadequate shipping allowances, and many discouraging conditions. But, as General Pershing put it in a conversation with Mr. Carter, the Chief Secretary in France, at a time when the supplies had been scanty for these reasons: "The Y. M. C. A. is not in this to avoid criticism, is it? But to render as much service as possible to the men under

the limitations under which we are all working in this war."

There were attacks on the Association which we recognized as arising from an invidious, sinister propaganda. Others were due to misinformation on the part of the critics. Still others sprang from personal grudges, as in the case of the captain I have just mentioned.

But there were criticisms which were both deserved and well intended; and these were always welcomed. They were the sort of kindly knocks which were really boosts. A Y. M. C. A. secretary has given credit for one such helpful jolt to a well-intentioned four-legged friend of the Red Triangle. On a very dark night, up in the woods, the secretary was trying to locate his dugout. The frequent bursting of high explosives on all sides probably confused him somewhat, as he groped around. He was walking with his arms extended, reaching for the dugout entrance, when he came suddenly into contact with a warm, hair-covered obstruction which he quickly guessed to be the starboard quarter of an army mule. He was left in no doubt, for the mule asserted himself at once. After a somersault or two, the secretary sat up

and found himself in the flickering candle glow of the very dugout he had been seeking. The mule had sent him flying through the doorway.

Just then a shell exploded with deafening racket outside. The next morning the secretary found unmistakable signs that the mule had died a martyr to the good impulse which had saved the life of a "Y" worker. It was certainly a helpful knock for the Red Triangle.

There was occasional dissatisfaction because the canteen supplies were low or at times entirely exhausted. But the men of our division were not unreasonable, when it was explained that this was due in the first place to the insufficient shipping room accorded the "Y"; in the second place to the condition of the French railroads, where often car-load consignments were sent astray and at one time an embargo on our goods was imposed by the French; and in the third place to our own scarcity of transportation —just four Ford camionettes with which to spread the supplies among thirty thousand men who were separated over quite an area. We had also a decrepit truck, but this was only occasionally in working order. Many trucks and

automobiles originally secured for the Y. M. C. A. had been commandeered by the armies.

We were likewise limited in men. We had been told by Paris Headquarters that efficiency demanded between one hundred and a hundred and fifty secretaries to an army division. The soldiers were arriving in France so rapidly, however, and it was proving so difficult to obtain suitable secretaries, that this was quite impossible. We soon were notified that we could not expect more than seventy-five men to a division. As a matter of fact, our force never reached above forty, and most of the time was somewhere between twelve and thirty. We were fortunate in having with us an exceptional worker in Mrs. Rebecca Ely, of New York—"Mother Ely," the soldiers called her. Her endeavours to share our life as far as possible, her unfailing eagerness to bring cheer and a home spirit into the relations of the Y. M. C. A. force, will live in the memories of us all.

One important factor in our success was the remarkable harmony that prevailed. Our workers were men of varied ages and trainings and temperaments, yet all had retained the spirit of youth, and all were united by a bond of loyalty

to the Divisional Secretary, Mr. Walter D. Howell. His admirable executive ability, his devotion to his work, his fair and generous spirit, his Christian sincerity, were the secret of our confidence in many trying times. He had served previously with the Y. M. C. A. force of the First Division, and at that time had been slightly gassed and was cited for courage and efficiency under exacting conditions.

Our soldiers were working with their French comrades in their first experiences on the quiet front in Alsace. In the village of Montreux-Vieux the company with whom I was staying at the time were quartered on the ground floor of a huge abandoned brewery. A company of French soldiers came to occupy the story above us. We struck up quite a friendship. They were soon learning to handle baseballs and basket-balls and attending our moving-picture shows and entertainments.

The French major at once entered into an argument with our Captain Lane. The French are most solicitous for the use of all available composts. Their regard for their manure piles is second only to their worshipful anxiety for their splendid highways. In the country dis-

tricts one could pretty well gauge the wealth and social standing of a peasant by the size of the heap of manure in his yard; and it was just as likely to be in the front yard as in the rear. This French officer sighted our picket line of fine horses; and he immediately claimed: "The manure is mine!"

"No," said Captain Lane, "for, you see, we own the horses, we fetch the water, we supply the oats and hay. It is American manure."

As evidence of their approval of this argument on the part of their captain, our men standing within hearing nodded their heads and sagely muttered: "Oui, oui, manure."

A family of the neighbourhood were especially kind in their personal attention. On bake days the mother, to show her friendly feeling, would send me in a pie or some dainties. I was urged to call upon them, and did occasionally, to express my appreciation and to gain a better idea of their home life, and to improve my French. The little boy of the family would follow me around by the hour, evincing great interest in all that was going on. One day I turned to him with the question, "Marcel, parlez-vous Anglais?"

At once he replied, and with great enthusiasm, "Oui, monsieur—'Get the hell out of here!'" It was evidently supposed to be a fine example of polite English, and I could appreciate that if he had kept as close to the doughboys about there as he had to me, this was probably the sentence he had most frequently heard.

A certain French officer serving as an instructor for our men was, like so many of his fellows, lavish in the use of pungent creams and perfumes in his own toilet. One of our privates, passing near him and catching a whiff of the fragrance, turned and glared. Then he exclaimed, "Say, the way that Frog smells, I don't know whether to hit him or kiss him!"

One of the French officers with a keen sense of the ridiculous was telling some of our own officers how extremely quiet it was always in their positions on the Alsatian front. He declared that the Germans never fired unless provoked. Presently he took a tin wash basin and went to a near-by trough for water. His back was turned towards the German trenches. As he leaned over, three machine-gun bullets, passing between his legs, zipped through the basin. He gave one astonished glance towards Ger-

many, as he ran and dove to safety near his American friends. But as he stood up, he merely remarked: "Messieurs, this looks suspicious. Some one must be shooting at me."

There was a very accommodating French lieutenant, who spoke excellent English, appearing under the management of the American Y. M. C. A. in most instructive lectures to the American soldiers. The men were captivated by his personality and intensely interested in his views of the war and his predictions. One night, as my route carried me near a town where he was speaking, I stopped for him, to bring him in my car back to Belfort. He proved a pleasant companion; and at one point a very amusing one. Running quietly along through the darkness of a sleeping town, we suddenly found ourselves almost upon a sentry, who had stepped into the road and called, "Halt!" As he did so, he brought his automatic down from above his shoulder and levelled it at the car. This greatly excited the Frenchman. He leaned from the car and shouted, "For God's sake, man, don't shoot us down!" The humour of the situation was almost too much for the

man on guard; and it so occupied my attention that we barely escaped running over him.

By this time I had begun to drive a Ford camionette, fitted up in back with shelves as a travelling canteen. My route took me to all parts of the division. I was able to visit twice a week the smaller units and detachments, whose size did not warrant the presence of a permanent secretary. Our "Y" force was not large at any time. The drives through some of the most beautiful parts of Alsace, the shouted enthusiasm of the peasants as the car whirled by, the eager welcome of the men I visited, brought zest and happiness into the day's work. It was a continuous round of visits to old friends, who were always cordial in their greetings. Passing through one village, a boy would stop me and ask me to take his watch to Belfort for repairs. At another, I would be flagged with the news that they were about to attack a chicken dinner, and an invitation to join them.

My favourite run was in a sweeping quadrilateral, starting south from Belfort to Montebelliard; then running northeast over the hills to Morvillars, the location of the French hospital in the beautiful château, and along the

canal to Division Headquarters at Montreux-Château, to a field hospital in a splendid old hunting lodge at Chavannes-les Grandes, another unit at Balersdorf and Dannemarie; and then northwest, stopping at a number of points on the road to Fontaine and La Rivierre, and back to Belfort. Sometimes I followed the cool, swinging drive along the Rhine-et-Rhone Canal until it brought me near the village of Montreux-Vieux, where my old friends of the Headquarters Troop were stationed. Here I often had time to stop and indulge in a swim with some of these boys who were making the most of this rare opportunity for sport.

When I first took my seat behind the wheel of the Ford, I had had no experience. By what I had learned from observation, however, I managed to extricate the car from its position behind the others in the small courtyard which we used for parking. My drive that evening, as I started on the return route of my first trip, was one of the most difficult I ever had to make. The man who had brought the car from Paris to Belfort, where we had our Divisional Y. M. C. A. Headquarters at the time, had ruined its brakes. No lights were allowed of course, and

it happened to be a cloudy night when many outfits were moving from place to place. It was especially ticklish when, having met and passed a number of marching men, crowding my machine far over towards the right-hand gutter, and then swinging around the left of a truck train, I saw speeding through the darkness from the other direction a dispatch rider on a motorcycle. It was a narrow, muddy road through some woods. With the disadvantage of useless brakes, it was a matter of inches as I dashed in between two of the trucks and then swung out again, giving the cyclist just time enough to brush by. One of the military police, riding with me, who had been a professional automobile racer, chuckled and declared it one of the narrowest escapes from accident he had ever seen.

When we left Alsace for the active front above Verdun, the first stage of our trip extended from Belfort to St. Dizier, and thence to Bar-le-Duc. Our Fords were loaded until they rode solidly on the differentials; yet we made good time amid scenery which was in itself enough to ward off fatigue, as we wound over the hills and through woods and picturesque

villages. Leaving Belfort at quarter past nine in the morning, and passing through Lure, Luxeuil, St. Loupe, Bains-les-Bains, Darney, Contrexville, Neufchâteau, Gondrecourt, Ligny-en-Barrois, we reached St. Dizier at six-thirty that evening.

One of the principal complaints of our men in France was the failure of the French drivers to observe traffic regulations and courtesy. One of our own "Y" force, Dr. L. A. Carley, of Caldwell, N. J., in charge of entertainments and religious work, was killed when riding in a motorcycle side-car, which collided in the dark with a recklessly driven French truck.

One evening after driving down from near Verdun, I was entering the city of Bar-le-Duc. I became caught when almost at the edge of the city in a truck train; and as other trucks were thundering past in the opposite direction and the road was quite dark, I decided to idle along easily and safely at the pace set by the big American Packards. We came to a sharp curve around the abrupt ending of a hill, and between the two truck lines from the direction of the city came one of the swift French cars. It was a reckless bit of driving, as the French-

man came shooting through the dark, well over towards the wrong side of the road. As we rounded the curve, he was headed straight for my Ford, which would have been pulverized if we had collided. A quick spurt on my part, and he crashed headlong into the three-ton American truck behind me. The next morning I was able to account for one of the French machines that lay wrecked by the side of that road.

Entering the same city on a cloudy night by the St. Dizier road, I found it impossible to see either the curbing or the sky-lines of the houses that lined the steep, winding street. I had just scraped the curbing with my right wheels and believed I was driving in the right direction; but it was as black as the interior of a tunnel, and a premonition of danger caused me to stop. My flash-light refused to work, so I struck a match. I found that my car was standing with its nose about two feet from the wall of a building on the left-hand side of the road. I was climbing in, to back away, when there was a startled shout from behind me; and there was a big American truck, which also had lost its way and had stopped just short of my machine when the driver had seen the flare of the match.

Shortly before this, a motorcyclist, shooting out from an alley and failing to hear the horn, ran into the front of my car. A crumpled mud-guard was all the Ford suffered, and the rider was fortunately only shaken up. But his machine was smashed and was hurled against another motorcycle which was also put out of commission. For this little affair, having brought down two machines in a single encounter, I bore for some time the proud title "Ace of the Y. M. C. A."

With this general banging around and a small shrapnel hole in a front mud-guard, the sturdy little car had an individuality of its own. One of my avowed ambitions was to bring home that Ford camionette and mount it as a souvenir in a corner of my den. It seemed almost like leaving a comrade in the lurch when, leaving for Paris on account of illness, I learned that another "Y" worker, who had taken my car out, had left it lying on its side half-way down a steep hill at the outskirts of Bar-le-Duc.

The first morning's drive up to the front above Verdun, where our boys were to go over the top at daybreak for the first time in the big

push, was one long to be remembered. With troops moving in and others withdrawing, with all sorts of trucks and automobiles and carts moving along the narrow, twisty way, with engineers frantically repairing big holes torn by shells during the night just passed, the progress was necessarily slow. We rolled along under the mouths of our heavier cannon, some distance back from the line, and as their shells seemed barely to skim the tops of our cars, we received the blasts of powder and dirt in our faces. All around us hidden batteries were roaring, and smaller pieces sharply barking. To the right, machine gunners were rat-tat-tatting at an impudent enemy plane; in the distance were the observation balloons; and the anti-aircraft shells split the air with high explosive. Ambulances came slowly back laden with wounded. Along the roadside were rolling kitchens, where soldiers were having their breakfasts.

As our four Fords, each with its Red Triangle easily seen, bulging with supplies and with secretaries for duty at the front, crept along the road just at the break of day, there was cheer after cheer for the "good old Y. M. C. A." and

men ran along beside us calling, "That's the spirit! Go to it, 'Y' men!"

Each of us felt that the reputation of the whole "Y" force depended upon his own conduct under fire. Through the trying days that followed there was evidenced clearly an *esprit de corps* which stood us all in good stead. One secretary, who should never have been admitted to the service, became faint-hearted before long and sought some pretext for being transferred to a safer section of France. But in the rear there were always hundreds of faithful workers eager to fill any vacant places at the front. The evening after his departure I proposed and sketched a medal for any possible future Y. M. C. A. slackers. It bore the inscriptions:

*"Extinguished Service Medal*
*Legion of Horror*
*Dugout Record Holder*
*Leaving the Front on Account of Hang-nails"*

We unanimously voted to award it to any one else who took it into his head to leave.

Arriving at the most advanced dressing station,—then located at Samogneux, but soon moved ahead as our line advanced,—we began

at once to dispose of the goods to the wounded and to the exhausted men entering and leaving the front line. As the attack progressed, we kept advancing our positions. We were in sight of the famous Dead Man's Hill, where the Germans had been firmly lodged, with marvellous underground passages and chambers. Some of our workers branched off through Death Valley; the others pressed straight up the road to Brabant and beyond.

Here one found difficulties in the ordinary duties of a secretary. It was no easy matter to be in charge of a wayside canteen set up behind a counter of packing-boxes or tree-trunks or a broken wall, or to pass the goods directly from the car to the frantically crowding men who nearly swamped it; and at the same time to deal with the boys who sought to send money home. Here we met old friends under new conditions. The soldiers, having accepted our "Y" force as their friends, did not hesitate to entrust their money, even when one of us did not happen to have his remittance blanks with him; and many of them did not want to bother with receipts. I was deeply touched when an Italian private one day handed me his savings and his home

address, saying, "You take him, Bo. I know you. Y. M. C. A. send him home to Italy."

Here our division held the front for twenty-one days without relief. They were days of constant work for the men of the Red Triangle. We had barracks some distance to the rear; but we were now up at the front, sleeping wherever we happened to be at nightfall. Indeed, some of us slept more comfortably under fire than back in the barracks, where occasionally a rat would scamper across one in the night. The duties often called for working several consecutive days with only one or two meals each; and I have gone for a week at a time with wet feet and no chance to change; a month with the same suit of underclothes, night and day.

During one night at Brabant, as I prepared for bed by rolling up in a blanket in the rear of my car, I counted twenty-four German shells that landed close by; and only three of them exploded. My count was confirmed the next morning by a lieutenant of a neighbouring anti-aircraft battery. A few feet from my machine a horse fell into a deep hole and had to be shot and buried where he had fallen. Some German

prisoners were under guard just across the road. Eddie Shriver, who had ridden with me that day, came in at midnight to sleep on the seat that let down from the side of the car. I was on the floor. Some horsemen brushed near us, and one horse shied and bumped into the Ford, knocking Eddie down on top of me. Thus we lay, until my right side had become sore with boring into the hard floor; then I nudged him, and we both flopped over. This kept up all night. Altogether the circumstances were not ideal for sleeping. The only real bed and mattress in that neighbourhood were plainly visible in the moonlight from where I lay. They were hanging from what remained of the upper story of a home that was all but demolished. This was the only building in the village that had even a vestige of the second floor remaining. Most of the former dwellings were reduced completely to rubble heaps.

Here we opened an advanced canteen for passing soldiers, who were eager to buy. All day long some of them would wait around until our "Y" cars, having gone back to the warehouse, thirty miles distant, returned with a fresh supply of canned fruit, cigarettes, cigars,

cakes, and newspapers. They clamoured for papers all along the road. One of the best appreciated services of the Association was the rushing of American newspapers, printed in Paris, out to the front.

We gave away canteen goods lavishly to the wounded and to the exhausted soldiers as they came from the firing-line; and we sought to favour, too, the hard-working men of the ambulance companies, who, in their turn, helped distribute to the wounded. We gave a great deal to different units of supporting artillery, which, having been working independently, had not been served regularly by any divisional Y. M. C. A. staff. By means of carrying parties, we succeeded in getting a good supply to those who were beyond our immediate reach. Thus we were able to keep the men of our division at the front abundantly supplied. When you find soldiers up there discriminating between different brands of cigarettes and asking you, when one kind is offered as a free gift, for another which better suits their tastes—then you know that they are not suffering from lack of canteen supplies.

One day we saw overhead the greatest num-

ber of aeroplanes I had ever seen flying together. At the time we were mainly interested because of the novelty of the sight, as they seemed to darken the sky. Later we learned that they had been returning from an important mission. At a certain point the Germans had prepared for a counter-attack, which might have been successful, since we could not quickly concentrate a sufficient force to meet it. These aeroplanes, therefore, had been hurriedly summoned. Rushing over to the massed Germans with a tremendous load of bombs, they dropped them and scattered the impending attack. It was an extraordinary sight, for usually in that region we saw only enemy planes hovering about and, by their signals, endangering the lives of the boys who formed in long queues at our canteens. Even when the shells began to come thick and fast, the soldiers refused to abandon their positions in line; and they were resentful when commanded by their officers to leave and seek cover.

Sleeping in the car at such places after the day's work, though dangerous, was far more comfortable than the nights passed inside the stuffy dugouts. The dressing station at the

end of the ambulance route, not far from the front lines, had been by some error established between two groups of light artillery. Consequently it was under constant shelling by the enemy, which at times became very severe. Here one night I was staying with about forty ambulance men. The cave was the size of an ordinary room; the air was stifling, due to the gas-proof doors; and the men were lying all over each other in grotesque positions on the floor. The stentorian snoring within that underground shelter rivalled the fury of the explosives outdoors. I fell asleep without difficulty, after a strenuous day. I was sitting on the edge of a wooden bunk, leaning upon my gas mask and overcoat which were doubled up in my lap. Beneath me on the floor was a boy who had his body under the bunk, and his head between my feet. In the middle of the night I was awakened by some one jerking my leg, and an angry voice demanding, "Who the hell's got his foot in my face?"

I suppose I had dragged it there in an attempt to change position. At any rate, I had my foot in his face—hobnails and all; so I sheepishly replied, "Y. M. C. A. man."

"Oh, I beg your pardon," he said. "That's all right!" And rolled over, sound asleep.

I had to leave here early in the morning, so when some one came in and called for four stretcher bearers, I accompanied them out the door, after carefully stepping over the prostrate forms of the sleepers. These four hurried out to bring in a man who had been wounded just seventy-five yards down the road. Meanwhile, I found my car in some bushes, where I had left it two days before. As I started to crank the engine, the stretcher bearers with their burden were returning. As they passed me, they were overtaken by a breathless runner, who begged them to hurry back, as a man had just been killed on the very spot where they had found this wounded man. The shrapnel and high explosives were bursting up in the trees, and fragments were rattling all around the car. I lost no time. Usually the starting was a difficult matter and involved jacking up a rear wheel, because of the chilly nights and the stiff oil we were furnished by the French; but the excitement of the situation gave me strength just then to spin the engine and get under way at once.

Along that road one day as I was driving slowly on account of the traffic, a familiar voice called my name. Instantly there flashed before me memories of student days at Princeton. Then I saw an artillery lieutenant scrambling down an embankment and headed for my car. As he jumped for the running-board, I recognized Don Fitton, a classmate and clubmate of former days. His outfit was temporarily attached to our division during that drive. Thereafter I often stopped in to renew old times; and also to help stay my hunger at his officers' mess.

Down in a little camouflaged ammunition dump tucked away in the woods of Alsace, I had in the same unexpected manner run across Tom Seister, another classmate. One day selling from my car to a crowd of boys whom I chanced to meet on the road, and feeling the effects of hunger from having skipped two meals in succession, I was pleased in more ways than one to have Lieutenant Harold Disbrow, another clubmate of Princeton days, happen along and invite me to eat with him.

There were many Princeton men in our

division. Lieutenant Chapman, formerly a professor at the University, Lieutenant Ober, and Captains Don Simons and George Stewart, at Division Headquarters, I had known in undergraduate days. This was only representative of the entire American Expeditionary Force. Her alumni may well be proud of the splendid record of well over three thousand Princeton men in the service, and the one hundred and twenty-five heroic dead. Nineteen of those who have made the supreme sacrifice, and ten of her wounded, had figured prominently in the athletic history of Old Nassau.

Up above Brabant, as I was making a trip back from the dressing station with six men—two of them wounded—in the rear of the car, the road was under steady fire. There was no time to think of gas masks, when a gas shell plopped on the road just ahead. My hands were busy with the wheel, on a ragged stretch of rough going; and there was just an instant in which to call to the others to hold their breath. Then we sped through the gas. I must have swallowed some of it, for although no serious harm was done to my lungs, I was ill with nausea the rest of that day, and during

the next two days was confined to bed in the barracks.

When next I approached that dressing station, drawing my car up at the side of the road, I heard the popping of machine guns, apparently nearer than usual. I was startled, thinking that the Huns must have advanced. Then as I stepped from the running-board of the car, a bullet glanced from one of the wires that were strung just overhead. Another clipped the branch of a tree where they were fastened, so that they came tumbling down about me. Looking up as I sensed the danger, there I saw a Hun plane circling around in leisurely fashion and cutting loose with its gun.

I started for the dugout, to ask for help in unloading my carful of supplies. Another man ran up, and we were going side by side, talking together, when a shell exploded just above us. The concussion carried my helmet off my head, but left me unharmed. Shrapnel struck my companion and ripped open his abdomen in an ugly wound. I have never learned whether he lived or died, after his ambulance trip to the rear.

While I was working in the First Aid Station

of the Third Battalion of the One Hundred and Fifteenth Infantry, machine gunners and snipers were concealed not far away in the trees. I saw something of the way our boys cleaned out these machine-gun nests. Right in front of our aid station was one of the doughty little one-pounders which excelled in that work. With one of these, our men could register a direct hit and then dismantle the gun and, bearing it on their shoulders, glide off through the woods to a new position. While we were there, the sergeant in charge of the gun brought three enemy machine guns and their operators out of a tree with a single clever shot.

It was my great delight to carry Y. M. C. A. supplies to these men at the front. It meant so much to them, and their appreciation was so unaffected. One day, during a terrific close range engagement, an American sergeant, running to the entrance of an enemy dugout, called in German: "How many of you are down there?"

"Six," came the answer, as they prepared to "kamerad."

"Well," he cried, hurling a hand grenade, "divide this up between you."

The next day trudging past the entrance of one of our own front-line dugouts, and seeing a boy peering from the door, I called: "How many of you are down there?" And when he had answered: "Well, divide this up between you." And down went a shower of chocolate dainties—big, luscious chocolate creams with cocoanut coating. A little bit of home taste for soldiers who were soaked with rain and chilly and weary of the brutalities of war.

"Say, Buddy," they laughed, after the scuffling and scrambling had subsided, "those things are sure better than hand grenades in a dugout!"

These men yearned for the cheer and satisfaction which the Y. M. C. A. sought to bring to them, as well as the wounded whom I had heard calling in Christ's name for cigarettes and chocolates. I wanted to have some part in helping to answer those prayers.

Presently I, too, was to have brought forcibly to my thoughts my own dependence upon God, out there cut off from all life as I had known it before. During the past days, as I had seen so many others carried away by shell-fire, I had been too desperately busy to allow my mind

to dwell on what it might mean for me and the loved ones at home. But this day, caught without shelter in the midst of a terrific fire poured over by the enemy, I was suddenly laid flat on my back by the concussion of a high explosive. Men just a few paces ahead of me on that footpath through the woods were cut to ribbons. For a moment as I picked myself up, my nerves seemed on the point of breaking. And then—I frankly admit it—I was afraid. I was afraid of being afraid, of yielding to terror.

But presently, warm as the sun on a troubled sea, came the consciousness that some one at home was praying. A vision of light, wavy hair and blue, tender eyes; and the feeling of panic had passed. Thenceforth I felt safe in God's keeping. Stumbling awkwardly under my load of "Y" supplies, I pitched forward and fell, just in time to escape a sniper's bullet which wanged into a tree above my head. That stubbing of my toe seemed like an answer to prayer. Then a shell tore up the narrow-gauge railroad track behind me, and fragments whistled near. But somehow the thought of some one at home safeguarding with her prayers steadied me through it all.

That night, ordered away from the front and out of the zone of extreme danger, back in the barracks I found, as though an assurance of those prayers, a waiting letter in writing that I knew. And it brought me her petition, in the words of John Oxenham:

*"Where'er thou be,*
*On land or sea,*
*Or in the air,*
*This little prayer*
*I pray for thee,—*
God keep thee ever,
Day and night,—
Face to the light,—
Thine armour bright,—
Thy 'scutcheon white,—
That no despite
Thine honour smite!—
With infinite
Sweet oversight,
God keep thee ever,
Heart's delight!—
And guard thee whole,
Sweet body, soul,
And spirit high;
That, live or die,
Thou glorify
His majesty;
And ever be,

Within His sight,
His true and upright,
Sweet and stainless,
Pure and sinless,
Perfect Knight!"

And in those words I could read the secret prayers of so many dear ones back home, whose hearts were with these very boys who had so gloriously borne themselves as young sir knights in this great crusade. How many of these dauntless young men whom I was privileged to know and to accompany in their days of testing could worthily bear the appellation of the gallant Bayard: "*Le Chevalier sans Peur et sans Reproche.*"

Soon came their relief, and the division retired from the front lines to the region of Bar-le-Duc for rest and replacements. Some of the ranks were terribly thinned; and many a man looked in vain for his Buddy in those days. It is a solemn time, when the division comes back. One of those boys, Private Stewart M. Emery, has described their plodding march back "for roll call and repair":

"Slogging back from action in the night,
Boys who've had their fingers in the fight;

Winding in the moonlight down the shattered
village street,
Crunching off the kilos on their numb and
leaden feet.
Couldn't pass inspection as to dress,
What they've been through any one can
guess—
Searing gas and cruel wire and blazing,
blasting shell,
Frozen, foodless, flare-mad nights and days
of raw, red hell.
Shrapnel battered transport in the rear,
Weary mule and weary muleteer;
Just another outfit that's been through the
mill up there
Rocking back for roll call and repair.
Straggling in the column anyhow,
Plodding blindly on to bunks and chow;
Tired faces breaking in the same unbeaten
grin,
Other faces missing that were there when
they went in.
Here and there platoons of scarce a score,
Squads of one and two—but that is war.
Made a little history when they called them
in the pinch,
Chucked the cost and made it, battling inch
by aching inch;
Silently they pass beneath the stars,
Carrying their honours and their scars.
Growl and glare of gunfire growing fainter
in the west,
Old Division's going back to rest."

It was a great satisfaction to be able to help those who had been through so much that they could never forget, to lose themselves for a while in the wholesome fun afforded by Y. M. C. A. entertainers. When our activities manager was killed in a motorcycle accident, the arrangements for ten or twelve entertainments a day in different parts of the division fell to my lot. Through the courtesy of Mr. Phelps, regional activities director, we were allowed an unusual number of entertainers. There were problems of transportation to settle and meals for the performers, suitable locations to be found and prepared for the shows, pianos to be procured, officers' permission to be secured. French villagers would look on in mingled astonishment and concern for the fate of their houses, when a "Y" man would appear at the head of a detail of about twelve huskies and request the loan of the family piano. While he was making his plea, the men usually fell to work and calmly removed the doors from their hinges, and began to carry the piano out to the waiting truck. Many a time we would slide into a treacherous mud-hole; and the men would work away with chains and spades and

rails, while some genius in the rear of the truck kept pounding out "Carry Me Back to Old Virginny."

And now after those twenty-one days when our boys had fought courageously and our "Y" men had worked incessantly, after we had counted up from our small force of secretaries one killed, one wounded, several slightly gassed, and others worn out and unable to continue work—by this time the officers and enlisted men could not say nor do enough for the Y. M. C. A. This was especially true of the medical men, stretcher bearers, and ambulance drivers, with whom some of the secretaries had been constantly associated in the work at the front. As the old "Y" car came through their town at the time of the armistice, streaming huge French and American flags, they jumped to their feet and cheered—as they had done that first day of our entrance into the big drive—for the "good old Y. M. C. A." Our Divisional Commander, Major-General Charles G. Morton, sent our Divisional Secretary a cordial letter of gratitude and commendation for the efficiency and courage and unselfishness of the Y. M. C. A. force attached to his division.

I know of many other such letters from officers high in command concerning the work of divisional Y. M. C. A. units. Many conscientious secretaries have brought home with them similar testimonials of the gratification of officers for their own personal efficiency and courage and their contribution to the morale of the soldiers, such as the letter his major sent to one of our secretaries, Dr. McCullough, of Pittsburgh, formerly Moderator of the United Presbyterian Church. If the Association should collect and publish a number of these letters from army officials, including General Pershing's own expressions of appreciation, the volume would form a very substantial monument of the effective aid the "Y" has been to the fighting men.

Intestinal trouble developing, due, the doctors said, to the gas, I spent a week in Bar-le-Duc and three more in Paris, in bed. Invalided home on this account, I finally boarded the *Megantic* at Liverpool, after all the anxieties and standing-in-line entailed by reporting to the military authorities and the various consulates at Paris, Le Havre, Southampton, and Liverpool.

At the entrance to New York Harbour, we passed a transport laden with returning soldiers. Across the water from these happy Americans floated the glad words which had been shouted so often towards the end of hostilities by our French comrades, as we sped past them along the roads: "Finis la guerre! Finis la guerre! Vive l'Amerique!"

When at last in a lifting fog the Goddess of Liberty showed faintly through the gray, as an apparition of the spirit of our fair homeland, I heartily responded to the sentiment of a negro soldier who exclaimed: "Once I gets the other side o' that there statue, all the rest o' the world's a-goin' to be No Man's Land to me."

# III

# Souvenirs Spiritual

## III

## SOUVENIRS SPIRITUAL

THE Y. M. C. A. through its lecturers and through personal work sought to instruct the soldiers in the French language, the peculiarities of the French and our other allies, local and general French history, and the underlying principles of the war; and so to play a large part in counteracting German propaganda among our men. It sought also to keep up the morale by its steadying influence for clean living and high-mindedness. Certain correspondents and investigators have objected to this branch of the work for the moral and spiritual welfare of the soldiers. It is remarkable that they and General Pershing do not agree on this point. They have indicated that the American Army is very well behaved, as armies go. This is true. It is also true that the officers and the men themselves,

with comparatively few exceptions, attribute this fact in large measure to the efforts of the Y. M. C. A. and similar organizations. And it is true that when French officers asked Pershing for the secret of the American morale, he advised them to send for American Y. M. C. A. secretaries. It is true that while I was in Paris one of the chief medical officers of the army came to Mr. Carter, Chief Secretary for France, and requested that an additional "Y" hut be erected in a certain block in one big port of entry for the sake of the effect it would have in combatting evil influences.

The exploitation of the returning soldiers as sponsors for particular views and prejudices is a familiar pastime. It is an easy matter for those who are so disposed, to make a veiled attack upon the Christian standards advocated by the Y. M. C. A. and the churches of America, by hitting at them over the shoulders of the soldiers.

We are told, as though it were a new discovery on the part of military men, that the true Christian must be unselfish, devoted not merely to his own salvation, but to the service of mankind and the betterment of the world. That is, however, something most of us recog-

nized before the war. So did the soldiers. The soldiers are too often looked upon as a peculiar species; instead of male American citizens from all walks of life and various degrees of education, who happen to be of military age and physical standards, selected impartially throughout all the country. If a poll were taken of the army, it would be found that in their religious orientation they have not shifted, in any great number, from their positions before entering the service. They are more stubborn and more frank in their opinions—that is all. Those who were religious are now more positive. Those who were indifferent to religion are now more difficult to interest in its claims.

Moreover, some critics go to the extreme of insisting that because the soldiers consider courage and unselfishness the supreme virtues, they are therefore antagonized by any presentation of the importance of moral integrity and spiritual fitness. Such a report is not only an obvious contradiction (for do not unselfishness and courage underlie all other manifestations of virtuous character?); it is also an aspersion upon the common sense and manhood of the army.

The Y. M. C. A. made no effort to force religious views upon the men; but, with the approval of General Pershing, it endeavoured to help the morale by its appeal to their spiritual natures and their moral principles. All religious workers were especially warned against a "holier-than-thou" attitude; and they were emphatically impressed with the social responsibility of the Christian Association for the lives and general welfare of the soldiers. The ideal is symbolized in the Red Triangle—Body, Mind, and Spirit.

While I was directing the activities, I was privileged to have for three days Bishop Hughes, of Boston, addressing different units of our division. The enthusiastic reception he was always accorded would have reassured any one who imagined that the American soldier had no time for a vigorous, manly Christian message.

The men attended religious services only of their own volition. I believe the only occasions when they were brought to meetings of this sort in entire units were when they had the opportunity of listening to Homer A. Rodeheaver, the famous song-leader who, with his songs and

smiles and stories and his trombone, completely won their hearts.

One of Rodeheaver's favourite stories concerns two darkies who were in a shell hole together, while the shrapnel was flying thick and fast. Finally one of those big screechers landed too near for comfort. One of them called out, "George, don't you think it's 'bout time you-all j'ined the church?"

"Go 'way man," was the quick retort, "I done jine when that first one come over."

It was not fear, however, that impelled those soldiers who sought out the religious services. Nor was it a trifling spirit of curiosity. They had thought things out and concluded that they needed what Christianity had to offer. I was closely associated with the members of the Sanitary Train—ambulance drivers, stretcher bearers, and doctors—in their work at the front. The first Sunday after we had retired from the lines, I was scheduled to speak to them at a religious meeting. Now, that crowd would have been horrified at the accusation of piety! Yet, although there was no compulsion—just an announcement by one of the officers, every man turned out.

A fellow-secretary on that Sunday asked that any of his battalion who felt the need of Christian prayer in their lives should tell him so; and every member of the battalion professed this desire.

The most precious memories of my association with the American soldiers are connected with our religious meetings and discussions. I shall always consider that I became actually at home with them during our first Sunday service in the hut at Prauthoy.

Notices of the meeting had been posted on the bulletin boards and in the town. On Sunday morning the boys came in expectantly for their first church service since leaving America. There were Jews and Catholics and Protestants; some were well educated, and others far from it. But they came so evidently with singleness of purpose and intent upon worship and meditation, that one could not have made the mistake of attempting to entertain them or offer them a brand of camouflaged religion.

I had by this time formed a conclusion concerning the American soldier which I never had reason to modify. I found him above all things straightforward. If he chooses to misbehave

and go to the devil, he is not at all surreptitious about it. Nor is he loud and boastful about it, like so many callow youths at home who exult in the sowing of their wild oats. He is bad, when he wants to be, in an open, matter-of-fact manner, and offers no apologies.

On the other hand, I discovered during this service, when he is attracted by good and lofty ideals, he is likewise unashamed; and when touched and deeply affected, quite ready to acknowledge it in a manly, straightforward spirit.

At this first service our thoughts turned naturally to the loved ones at home. And whenever they were mentioned in sermon or prayer, some of the boys who had never been far away from home before made no effort to conceal their emotions. Just the day before, when some one with a special fondness for "O Promise Me" had played that record several times on the phonograph, a little homesick Southerner had jumped up and yelled: "Say, Eddie, cut it out. I can't stand that any more." And this morning he sat with tight pressed lips and staring eyes whenever we spoke of the hopes which fathers and mothers and sweethearts reposed

in their soldiers; or when a sacred solo, one of the favourites at home, floated out from the Victrola on the platform.

After the service they gathered about the piano for an informal sing. The old hymns and the new ones were called for one after another. Over in a shadowed corner I had found a seat next to this little homesick fellow. The tears glistened in his eyes and welled over onto his cheeks, yet he sang with the rest. I put my arm around his shoulders. He leaned against me with a grateful sigh. Then smiling bravely he pulled himself together, edged over nearer the piano, and joined lustily with the others:

"I'm pressing on the upward way,
New heights I'm gaining ev'ry day;
Still praying as I onward bound,
Lord, plant my feet on higher ground.

"Lord, lift me up and let me stand
By faith, on heaven's table land;
A higher plane than I have found,
Lord, plant my feet on higher ground."

Over on the Alsatian front, I went one Sunday morning to speak in one of the numerous French towns between Belfort and the front line, in which the various units of the Twenty-

ninth Division were quartered. We conducted the service from the stone steps of an old-time dwelling, in which several of our soldiers were billeted. We had been fortunate in securing a piano in this unlikely place; and the French inhabitants gathered and listened in amazement as the fresh young American voices woke the echoes of the public square.

The secretary who was in charge there made the mistake of attempting to curtain the real purpose of the meeting behind a lot of introductory pleasantries. The men were manifestly restless; and finally one of them, to the accompaniment of murmured approval, called: "Aw, cut out that bunk and get down to business!"

So we did.

And as always, the soldiers meant business. They had come there to worship, and they had no timidity; nor had they any excuses to offer for being Christian soldiers. In truth, their favourite hymn, for which they called under all circumstances, was "Onward Christian Soldiers"; and even those who did not care for religious services and who were careless in their lives were always ready to join in its swinging measures.

They were interrupted by an air battle, which took place, to the accompaniment of bursting shells, right above our heads. And yet it was not a distraction. We had been thinking of our part in the great crusade which, under the guidance of God, was to free the world for the fuller realization of His life among men and nations. And shading our eyes, up there in the blue we could see one of our comrades of the air risking his life, fighting single-handed, and winning for the very cause of which we spoke. And how we cheered then; and after this object lesson turned back refreshed to our service. After that it was easy and natural to conclude the address with a few simple, thoughtful words—simply and thoughtfully received—about the necessity for keeping ourselves clean in life and mind and soul, in order to be true knights, worthy of this great and righteous crusade with which those back home had entrusted us. This led us to Christ, our perfect Companion and Leader, our Source of strength. Then we closed with a hymn. Heads up, eyes level, they sang; and even the uncomprehending French bystanders seemed to catch something of the significance of their attitude:

"Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Stand in His strength alone;
The arm of flesh will fail you,
Ye dare not trust your own:
Put on the gospel armour,
Each piece put on with prayer;
Where duty calls, or danger,
Be never wanting there."

One Sunday afternoon towards evening, I had taken a load of canteen supplies to another secretary, whose regiment was stationed up where the shells were falling. At his invitation I stopped to hold a short service before starting with my Ford camionette on the return route. This would mean night driving without lights; but with several soldiers joining in the request one could not refuse.

The secretary was living in a small room of a rickety old building, so we decided to hold the meeting out-of-doors. The word was passed from group to group. It was not long before we had quite a gathering, sitting in a semicircle beneath the trees in a near-by orchard. There, fairly well screened from observation from above, we met in a short, informal moment of prayer and thought.

All I did was to offer a little encouragement

in a few quiet words about God, our Father. Then the others, without urging and with no appearance of self-consciousness, gave utterance to their thoughts. They were not self-conscious, because they were God-conscious. I had never before heard a group of men speak so naturally and assuredly—at the same time reverently—of the Almighty, as did those Christian young men who had drawn aside for their brief companionship of worship at a time when they realized that life might be cut short at any minute. These boys were upright in their lives. They were downright in their convictions and knowledge of the heart. They were outright in the expressions of speech and prayer.

We were praying together when a shell burst in a near-by field, between us and the sun, which was dipping low. We raised our heads, and I think we were all caught by the strange beauty, as the glow from the west shone through the rising cloud of dust and smoke. It was a picture of just what we had been experiencing for the last few minutes within our own breasts—the glory and comfort of the Eternal shining warmly through the ugliness of man's short battles.

Then without accompaniment we sang,

"Lead, Kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom."

Having moved away from the comparative quiet of the Alsatian front up to the stiff fighting on the eastern bank of the Meuse above Verdun, we learned one day that part of our division was to go over the top the next morning for the first time in the big drive. In our barracks there were fourteen "Y" secretaries spending the night. We had all gone to bed, but before we blew out the lights we held a little prayer meeting of our own, each man offering his petition for the lives and souls of our fighting men whom we had come to love so well. I shall never forget the unwonted quiet that followed. As a rule, we were a boisterous lot of bed-fellows; but this night we swiftly put out the candles and lay there in the dark, each of us concerned with his own thoughts.

After rising at three o'clock the next morning for an early start, to reach the front by daylight, I had reason to recall those prayers, as I saw our brave fellows going forward to the attack. Their first objective was a hill which the French declared could not under the most favourable conditions be stormed in less than

ten hours. They swarmed over it in exactly seventeen minutes.

Some of these boys I had met with just the morning before. Starting early with my faithful Ford and taking along a load of goods, I kept an appointment with another secretary, speaking to his men at an eleven o'clock service. His outfit was quartered in Verdun, up by the massive citadel. The next day they would be in the fight.

I felt, and tried to express, the significance of our morning gathering there in the stronghold that had been made famous in all the world and for all time, by the heroic defense of our French comrades. With the great test so near, every one was serious that day; but there was a particularly solemn hush in that room as we thought together of their friends already on the firing line, of the stern work cut out for them for the morrow. The boys knew that some of them would not come together again in such a meeting in this world; and I knew that I was speaking to some of them for the last time. The unspoken need which all of us felt prompted some one to call for his favourite hymn: "I Need Thee Every Hour."

Then there came a few words about the kind of soldier the Master desires. A few words about the courage of the Christian, fighting Christ's battles in the world and in his own heart. Then together we pledged ourselves—come what might for the remainder of our lives—to loyalty to the great Captain of clean and triumphant manhood.

Other meetings were even less formal. Some were quite unexpected. One day, as I was selling from the back of my car, which was drawn up by the roadside, to a group of tired soldiers whom I had chanced to meet, I saw a familiar face approaching through the crowd. Then my friend, drawing near, demanded: "Say, Warren, how about this verse in the New Testament, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.' What does that mean? My Buddy is a Catholic, and I can't quite 'get' the way he reads it."

Another nodded and said, "That verse always puzzled me, too."

As others were listening—some from curiosity, some from real interest—I pulled out my pocket Testament and read the words in their full setting. Describing quickly the circum-

stances in the relation between Jesus and His disciples at the time they were spoken, I stated my own interpretation. And then I took occasion to add a few words about the deity of Christ, and His appeal to the common sense and the manly instincts of the soldier.

After that the selling was different.

Out there on the road under the clearest of skies, we felt His presence. It seemed somehow that Christ Himself was there, unfolding to us, as no words could, the meaning of the Scripture.

As the men lingered about the car, I was loath to leave. It seemed to me that we might have been standing on the road to Emmaus.

During one of the fiercest bombardments north of Verdun, about sixty men had taken refuge one evening in a shallow dugout which was really no security at all. The air was stifling, and they were crammed in so tightly that under any circumstances the strain on their nerves would have been seemingly unbearable. But they had the added anxiety of knowing that a single well directed shell could demolish their flimsy shelter.

Thoughtlessly somebody swore. At once

through the darkness arose a storm of protest: "Cut out that cussin' and get to prayin'—you!"

After a silence, while the ground was rocked by high explosives, some one began to hum. And then others softly caught up the words:

"Be not dismayed whate'er betide,
God will take care of you;
Beneath His wings of love abide,
God will take care of you.

"God will take care of you,
Thro' every day,
O'er all the way;
He will take care of you,
God will take care of you."

Into our advanced dressing station one day there limped a young fellow with a machine-gun wound through his knee. Refusing the aid of litter bearers, he had hobbled three miles through the forest in the direction of our station. And there he stoically stood while his leg was dressed and the anti-tetanus serum was injected. I offered him a tempting bit of chocolate. He shook his head and said, "Give it to some one that's hurt bad." I had almost to force him to take it. Directed to a waiting am-

bulance, he declined the trip to the hospital. He insisted upon returning to his duty.

"I'm not done for yet," he said. "I came over here to soldier, and damned if I don't soldier. If the good Lord will only let me get that ammunition train through, that's all I ask of Him."

And so there was a great deal of praying at the front. It might not have passed as such back home in some church circles. But it rang true out there—rough and ready prayers of rugged men who found themselves up against it. Those who had so lately profaned Christ's name in thoughtless moments of soldier life, now pronounced it with a new accent.

"For Christ's sake, give me a cigarette!" The chaplain and I, standing near, started at these words which rang through the dugout one evening. They might have sounded like blasphemy; in reality they were a prayer. The man who uttered them, little more than a boy, had been shot deep in the back and was lying on his stomach on a stretcher. Having anticipated his call, I was just then lighting and puffing on a cigarette, which I presently placed between the lips of the tortured soldier. Then we heard

his sigh of relief and—"Thanks. I'm better now."

"Mr. Secretary," said the chaplain, "I believe you helped to answer a real prayer then. For surely the One who declared, 'Inasmuch as ye do it unto one of the least of these . . .' must recognize in the simplest entreaty which a suffering soldier of Liberty offers in His name a genuine prayer."

The chaplain, a few minutes before, had helped to bring this boy and another on stretchers to the dugout. He had gone out himself alone into No Man's Land and rescued them from their perilous position where they had been lying wounded since early in the day. Now he stood there, his uniform muddy and torn, leaning wearily against the wall. His eyes were heavy for sleep, yet he was watching every motion as the skillful fingers of the surgeon cleaned and dressed the wounds. He inquired about the boys' chances for recovery. Reassured on this point, he addressed himself politely to the doctor. Always the faultless Southern gentleman, even the heavy pounding of the guns and the shock of war's grim scenes could not joggle him from his accustomed

courtesy. He saluted and in his careful drawl announced:

"And now, Captain, if you will excuse me, I think I will go back and try to find some more."

We shaded our candles, as he opened the door and stepped out into the dark. There was a low whistle from one of the ambulance men. "Say," he exclaimed, "some man, that! I've always said that fellow was a prince. Now I'll tell the world he's a gentleman."

"Yes," observed another, "the Chaplain's a man all right. The kind of Christian, too, that makes a fellow think."

Two nights later the chaplain came again into the dressing station. This time he was carried on a stretcher. Once more he had gone out on his perilous errand of mercy to rescue one of his boys. When he failed to return, others, who loved him for his quiet manliness, had gone to search for him. And now he lay there in a pool of blood. His leg was gone; his frame was shattered; his life was a matter of minutes, and he knew it. But his courage was strong; his faith was unshaken; and he was smiling, this Christian gentleman who was not afraid to die. He thanked every one partic-

ularly for the efforts to ease his pain. He seemed to be waving a cheery farewell, as he peered around through the flickering candle light at the anxious faces and called several of the boys by name.

Then reaching for the doctor's hand he said: "And now, Captain, I must be leaving you. Good-bye. God's will be done."

And so the knightly spirit carried on.

Somewhere in the South there are aching hearts, I know; but blessed with a sacred love. And many a thoughtful American lad is missing this man of the regiment; yet still living and growing in manhood under his influence. And I carry always this souvenir—the memory of God's Gentleman.

The best of these meetings at the front were not largely attended. They were the times when two or three were met together. The talks were personal. It was easier to find God because in our heart-to-heart way we reached out and found each other.

While I was working one night in the first-aid station which had been set up in a dugout forming part of the front line of our sector, out from the rain of shrapnel and high explosives a

stalwart soldier brought his pal. The lad was young and slender, and shaken with shell shock. After a few words of encouragement, the big fellow turned to go back to his post of duty. But the other threw his arms around his neck. His voice broke in a great sob as he cried, "Oh, Bob, for God's sake don't leave me. I can't stand the noise."

After a while he was quieted. Then he sat over in a corner, morose, morbidly thinking of the horrors outside, quivering from head to feet. I slipped to the bench beside him and talked to him. Presently, almost without his suspecting it, I had him munching on some chocolates and biscuits. Then when he saw that he was not so badly off as he had imagined, and found that he was talking to a Y. M. C. A. man, his confidence was won. While others were busy with the wounded, we had a friendly talk off there in a corner of the dugout, where a candle was sputtering on the table.

At last he burst out: "Say, if religion means taking care of a fellow like this, I'm strong for it!"

We talked a little more. He knew his need. It was only necessary to guide him to the One

who is the satisfaction for all our needs, the strength for all our weaknesses. There in the corner, just before the candle burned itself out, the boy accepted Christ as his own. As we quietly shook hands on it, he smiled and said, "Say, but won't my mother be glad!"

"Mother" was a magic word out there. Many a time I have heard an ambulance driver or stretcher bearer telling of a narrow escape of some friend of his during the shelling, whereupon another would observe, "Well, that fellow's mother's prayers were following him all right."

Many a soldier has been saved from his lower self by thoughts of mother and sweetheart. One of the most impressive and thrilling experiences of my life came to me one night during my conversation with five young men, of whom this proved true.

We were located on a hill overlooking a little manufacturing town of eastern France. Out under the window of the abandoned, tumbledown house, in which I had set up my canteen and my cot, mechanics had been working all day on the engine of a big Cadillac touring car.

As dusk drew on, I became an interested bystander. With the coming of darkness the group of workers dispersed; but one of them lingered, and we talked together. We talked of many things. We compared our impressions of the war, of France, of the French soldiers, of the French peasants. We spoke of the morals, or lack of morals, of the French inhabitants of that little manufacturing town, to whom licentiousness appeared a virtue.

And this led him to confide that, since the opportunity was so constantly offered to him, he had decided to have his little fling, and to start in that very night. I asked him about his family at home. He admitted that he was married, but averred that he was glad to be free to amuse himself for a while.

Then I brought from my pocket a picture of my own wife, spoke of our courtship, our love for each other, and remarked that we expected, before I could get back to the States, a little baby in the family.

"Now," I asked him, as he began to understand where I was leading, "supposing I, after looking at this picture and thinking these thoughts, should thrust the picture into my

pocket and the thoughts into the back of my head, and go down-town and do as you have been talking of doing. What would I be, in your estimation?"

Unhesitatingly, he replied, "Why, a mucker."

Of course I did not need to drive the point home. He did not go down-town that night. He went to his billet and to bed; but not until we had had a quiet talk together about Christ, "the purest among the mighty, and the mightiest among the pure," and the soldier had surrendered his heart.

I had not had time to go to my own room after this interview, before another acquaintance sauntered by. We drifted together and began to chat. To my astonishment, the conversation followed almost exactly the lines of the previous one; to such an extent that it impressed me as most uncanny. I knew what he would say in every instance before he said it; for his ideas, his weak desires, his way of expressing them, were the same as those which the other boy had held.

And I followed the same line of reasoning. I brought out the same photograph, I used almost the same words. I appealed to him in the

name of his sweetheart and spoke of the father and mother back home who had put their trust in him. And I gave him a little card bearing a verse about Mother, which had been a great help to me. Again the thought turned to Christ, our example, our comrade, our strength; and again a boyish heart yielded.

When the third man came up to me, and the conversation took precisely the same course, I began to understand that it was not chance that had brought them there; nor any mechanical trick of the memory that induced me to speak to each one in the same manner and with the same result.

And I knew finally, when in that one evening I had spoken with five young men—three on their way down to the village and two as they were returning from their revels—that God in a mysterious and most amazing way was using me as His spokesman. It impressed me as the highest privilege and honour I could ever hope to have. And to-day I am awed and filled with wonder and gratitude, when I recall that evening's continuous, one-by-one conference of prayer and council.

The memory of that occasion early in my ex-

perience in France always carries with it a recurrence of a thrill which was mine just before leaving for home. On the road one day towards the close of my work over there, I met one of these five men, whom I had not seen for some time. He smiled as he held out his hand.

"Well," said he, "you see I have come through the drive all right. The bullets didn't get me. And neither did the temptations you warned me against." Then bringing from the pocket of his blouse a dingy looking card, he added, "This helped to carry me through." It was the copy of the poem I had given him the night of our talk together.

One could not better close his memories of the days in France than with this thought of the Mothers of America, who accompanied their sons in their great crusade over there.

### To My Son

"Do you know that your soul is of my soul such part,
That you seem to be fiber and core of my heart?
None other can pain me as you, son, can do;
None other can please me or praise me as you.

Remember the world will be quick with its
blame,
If shadow or stain ever darken your name.
'Like mother, like son,' is a saying so true
The world will judge largely of mother by
you.
Be this then your task, if task it shall be,
To force this proud world to do homage to
me.
Be sure it will say when its verdict you've
won,
She reaps as she sowed. *This man is her
son.*"

# IV

# Souvenirs Statistical

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## SOUVENIRS STATISTICAL

THE formidable and rapidly growing task which confronted the Young Men's Christian Association in the great World War and the undaunted spirit with which it was accepted and performed will stand forth always as an inspiring memory among my personal souvenirs. One should consider himself highly privileged to have had even a small part in this service, whose proportions and importance will become more and more recognized with the passing of time.

A fair idea of the size of the organization is obtained from comparison in this respect with other excellent relief organizations. The Salvation Army operated regularly at forty points; the Y. W. C. A. at forty-eight points; the Knights of Columbus at sixty points. The American Y. M. C. A. operated regularly at 3,356 points: at 1,507 with the American Expeditionary Forces; at 1,849 with allied forces and prisoners.

The amazing and greatly appreciated services rendered the soldiers of other countries—the French, Italians, Czecho-Slovaks, Russians, Chinese; the armies in Palestine, Mesopotamia, Gallipoli, Macedonia, India, Africa—has led in every case the highest officials of those countries to urge the indefinite expansion of the Red Triangle work after the war.

The American Y. M. C. A. overseas workers were distributed as follows:

505 in Great Britain.
6,812 " France.
273 " Italy.
55 " Russia.
72 " Siberia.
1 " Greece.
3 " Denmark (prisoners-of-war).
8 " Switzerland.
1 " Germany with prisoners (had neutral assistants).
6 " Gibraltar.
3 " Palestine.
10 " India.
90 " Mesopotamia.
4 " Egypt.
7 " East Africa.

(There were also 4,763 "Y" workers in cantonments and camps in America, and neutral workers among prisoners.)

Our interest is naturally centred upon the "Y" work with the American Expeditionary Force in France. It is here especially that the achievements of the Association merit the gratitude of the American people.

In France the Y. M. C. A. forgot itself into immortality. It thought only of the army. Amid tremendous handicaps, it sacrificed itself in the straining to meet an infinite human need; and out of that sacrifice it is rising to-day into a new and abundant life.

The standards of the Red Triangle were put into action within the army and were kept there from start to finish.

**Y** men and women were found
**O**n troop trains,
**U**pon transports,
**N**ear the docks,
**G**uiding city sightseers,

**M**anaging hotels and clubs,
**E**ntertaining audiences,
**N**erving against weakness,
**S**ending money home,

Conducting canteens,
Hiking with infantry,
Riding on freight cars,
Instructing illiterates,
Sewing soldiers' clothes,
Teaching French classes,
Instituting college courses,
Assisting chaplains,
Nurturing character,

Arranging athletics,
Sharing soldier food,
Sleeping in mud,
Offering refreshment,
Carrying wounded,
Imparting cheer,
Ardently rallying,
Tenderly ministering,
In first aid stations,
Over the top,
'Neath the poppies of France.

*The Personnel* of the organization was, of course, a main dependence in this great work. The demand for men and more men grew with the army. The demand far outstripped the supply.

Young men within the draft ages could not be accepted, unless they were very obviously physically disqualified for army service. The

great number therefore had to come from the ranks of older men.

The several state committees which canvassed the country for men considered at least 150,000 possibilities. About 40,000 of these were selected for consideration by the Headquarters Committee at New York. Finally, 11,229 were accepted and sent overseas. December 15, 1918, there were 6,048 men and 1,395 women in "Y" uniforms overseas. After the signing of the armistice, the Association undertook to send across women workers at the rate of 100 a week, for duty in the leave areas and French and English ports.

According to Mr. Geo. W. Perkins: "In any form of organization in civilian life, whether it be in public schools, chain stores, or corporations, if ninety per cent of those originally employed make good the results are regarded as highly satisfactory. If ten per cent of the 11,229 people operating in France for the Y. M. C. A. were inefficient, it would mean that there were 1,122 men and women who were more or less of a failure. I do not believe that anything like this number of people were unsuccessful." Thus it is estimated that the Y. M. C. A. work-

ers in France were more than ninety per cent efficient. In view of the constant and trying emergencies faced by these inexperienced secretaries, this is decidedly a winning record.

Of these men and women operating for the "Y" sixty-one gave their lives in France. Eighteen of them were killed in action or died from wounds; the rest from accidents, exposure, and overwork. One hundred and twenty-six were wounded. One hundred and fifty-two were cited in official orders, and sixty-three decorated for bravery. In the Argonne drive over 700 workers, fifty of them women, with 140 "Y" trucks were attached to the fighting units; in the Château-Thierry and St. Mihiel drives there were over 2,000 "Y" secretaries. During the drives of the spring and summer of 1918 the Y. M. C. A. gave away to the fighters more than a million dollars' worth of supplies. The Red Triangle trucks were used as ambulances, and the secretaries put to good account their stretcher bearer drill.

The Association provided for free canteen supplies to troops in combat or on long marches and to wounded. The value of its gifts in 1918 was $1,400,000.

Free service was given to thousands of men in the Argonne Forest. Fifty thousand copies of the Paris editions of the *New York Herald* and *London Daily Mail* were distributed each day; 4,000 sent to the front lines by aeroplanes. The Y. M. C. A. attempted to get supplies to the famous Lost Battalion by aeroplane. Ralph A. Amerman of Scranton, Pennsylvania, has a letter of acknowledgment from the Commander of the Aero Squadron, to whom they were delivered for carrying. Harry W. Blair of Carthage, Missouri, and S. B. Burrows of Brooklyn, were within 1,000 yards of this battalion during the six days they were surrounded. A letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Whittlesey to Mr. Burrows describes the "Y" service:

"S. B. Burrows, Esq.,
811 Beverly Road,
Brooklyn, N. Y.

*My Dear Mr. Burrows:*

You have called my attention to the fact that the statement has been made that, on the relief of the 'Lost Battalion,' money was charged by the Y. M. C. A. for chocolate and cocoa supplied to the men. Of course you and I know that this is not a fact, and I take great pleasure in stating that on that occasion the first hot food which the men received was the cocoa supplied by the Y. M. C. A.

The assistance of the Y. M. C. A. at that time was tremendously appreciated by the men and by the officers, and was given in a fine and liberal spirit without any suggestion of reimbursement. Furthermore, the Y. M. C. A. was the only organization present at that time. I should like to add that the work of the Y. M. C. A. in our regiment was of the very greatest help, and was thoroughly and gratefully appreciated.

Sincerely,
CHARLES W. WHITTLESEY."

The following statement was made by Major J. W. Woolridge, 38th Infantry, at the Letterman Hospital, San Francisco:

"I have seen Y. M. C. A. canteen workers crawl on their bellies under the most devilish fire the Germans ever sent over. I have seen them die. I have watched these men mingle with the boys in the front line distributing chocolate, cigarettes and tobacco. Never have I seen a Y. M. C. A. man charge any man, holding a front line, a nickel."

In closing a stirring public address in Washington at the time of the presentation of Croix de Guerre to three secretaries from overseas, Secretary of War Baker paid this splendid tribute to "Y" secretaries:

"So, in a certain way, the Y. M. C. A. has represented the heart of America and has carried to the

soldiers abroad our affections and our ideals for them. . . . When we survey this superb army which is now coming home, with its broadened shoulders, bronzed cheeks, robust health, splendid nerve, and high spirit that comes with great accomplishment, we must remember that among the formative influences that went into it and made it possible was this social spirit which was carried from home to the front line trenches, which shared the privations and dangers, was an integral part of the army—for in 'No Man's Land,' where the shells fell thick and fast, there are the graves of the American soldiers and the graves of the 'Y' worker, side by side, not separated in their work, not separated in their faith, not separated in spirit, not separated in their sacrifice; finally united in their last resting place. . . ."

*The Post Exchange* or Canteen Service was not a part of the original "Y" program. It was taken over at the request of General Pershing, to relieve the army of this branch of work at a critical time, when every available enlisted man was needed for active service. In accepting this difficult assignment the Y. M. C. A. was handicapped by not having a sufficient number of men trained and adapted to such work; but it did a great and patriotic service in assuming an unfamiliar and burdensome responsibility.

The money for operating the Post Exchange

was borrowed capital. This branch of the work was operated on a "turn over basis," the goods sold at wholesale cost plus freight and unavoidable expenses. This was in conformity with General Pershing's Order No. 33. There was no question of conducting this huge canteen without charge. Had this been attempted the bill would have amounted to $300,000,000 or more.

No charge was made for either rental or clerk hire, and prices were kept down despite trans-oceanic shipping.

When the first supplies from America were received they were sold at the price prevailing at home prior to the war. This was somewhat above the charges of the Quartermaster's Sales Commissaries which were opened in a few points for limited hours. The Quartermaster's goods, purchased at the lowest possible price, were, by act of Congress, sold at actual cost, without including charges for ocean tonnage or transportation in France. On August 1, 1918, the prices of articles sold in Y. M. C. A. canteens were therefore reduced to conform to Quartermaster's prices, though it meant an actual loss of five per cent to eight per cent be-

tween the cost and selling price. Such prices have approximated sixty per cent to seventy-five per cent of the current retail price for the same article in America. Each hut was supplied with a large poster giving a complete list of the prices at which goods were to be sold.

SAMPLE PRICES OF ARTICLES SOLD IN Y. M. C. A. CANTEENS IN FRANCE, OCTOBER, 1918.

| | Selling price French Money | Corresponding value U.S.Money | Prevailing Price same article in U. S. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Chocolate, (100 grams) 3½-ounce bar, made in France.....Frs. | .75 | $0.13½ | $0.17½ |
| Chocolate, Hershey's small bar.. | .25 | .04½ | .07 |
| Dental Cream ..... | .75 | .13½ | .20 |
| Hot Cocoa, Coffee, or Tea, per cup | .25 | .04½ | .10 |
| Gillette Razor Blades, per dozen. | 3.00 | .54 | 1.00 |
| Tan Shoe Polish, per tin..... | .50 | .09 | .15 |
| Colgate's Shaving Stick..... | 1.00 | .18 | .25 |
| Star Chewing Tobacco, per cut.. | .45 | .08 | .10 |
| Cigarettes, Camels, 20's..... | .50 | .09 | .15 |
| Cigarettes, Fatima, 20's..... | .55 | .10 | .15 |
| Cigarettes, Sweet Caporals, 20's. | .30 | .05½ | .10 |
| Cigars, El Roi Tan and similar grades ..... | .35 | .06¼ | .12½ |
| Smoking Tobacco, 2-ounce Prince Albert ..... | .60 | .11 | .15 |

A Franc averages 18 cents in U. S. money.
A Centime is about one-fifth of a cent. 100 Centimes make a Franc.

In this effort to give the soldiers the benefit of reduced prices, the "Y" has lost thousands of dollars in "excess of cost over selling price" —for example, $150,000 in September, 1918. The business handled by the Post Exchange system multiplied fivefold in eight months—

from less than one million dollars in January, 1918, to over five million dollars in September of that year.

With the great congestion in transportation during the period of hostilities it was at times impossible to get anything like a sufficient supply of goods to the distributing points. The army had agreed to allow the Y. M. C. A. 208 tons of shipping space per month from the States to France for every unit of 25,000 men; yet when the demand was at its height the "Y" was unable at any time to secure more than 100 tons per month for every 25,000 men. The army finally placed the allotment at 100 tons and it was several months before the exigencies of war demands permitted even this tonnage.

In a public address at Le Mans, January 29, 1919, General Pershing said regarding this lack of a proper tonnage of supplies:—

"It was one of the faults of war conditions. We could not have supplied any more tonnage if we had been running the canteen ourselves."

This disappointment in the apportionment of ocean tonnage seriously hampered the canteen work; but the organization, undaunted, turned at once to manufacturing a large part of its re-

quirements in France. Through the coöperation of the French Government the Y. M. C. A. reopened a number of idle factories, furnished raw materials, supervised manufacture, and used the entire product. It entirely operated fifteen mills for eatables and took over the entire food product of twenty-six others; also running three other big manufacturing plants. These included thirteen chocolate factories and twenty biscuit factories.

The monthly output of these factories averaged 18,000,000 tablets, rolls, or bars of chocolate, 3,000,000 cartons of caramels, 10,600,000 packages of biscuit and 2,000,000 tins of jams.

Excepting in rare instances all the raw materials for use in these factories were purchased in the neutral countries. France which had closed all chocolate and candy manufacturing in that country during the earlier part of the war permitted the purchase of 500 tons of cocoa beans and 500 tons of tin. Fruits, fruit pulp, chemicals, figs, and other material were purchased and transported to France by the Y. M. C. A. from England, Italy, Switzerland, Spain, Portugal, Sweden, and the tropics. Lard was obtained in Brazil. The sugar and flour was

sent from the United States. Even the lumber and paper for use in the factories to prepare the goods for shipments were imported.

At one time during a shortage of writing paper and envelopes, a contract for 100,000,000 sheets of paper and envelopes was placed in the town of Tolosa, Spain, and most of the men, women, and children were exclusively engaged on this contract.

On another occasion approximately a thousand tons of paper pulp, lampblack for the printing, and other necessities were shipped into France and the paper and envelopes manufactured in French factories opened for that purpose.

Yet the Association was still embarrassed by a lack of transportation. The railroads in France were so congested that at times it was impossible to get supplies moved from place to place, and often difficult to get those shipped from America away from the coast or off the docks. The military supplies for the Allied Armies always took precedence over everything else. To relieve this difficulty as far as possible, and facilitate deliveries, the Y. M. C. A. secured in the United States and Europe auto-

mobiles and trucks. For the establishment of its motor transport system, it purchased up to January 1, 1919, 1,522 automobiles, auto trucks, and motorcycles at a cost of $2,234,117.

It is estimated that fully eighty per cent of the transportation in France of the Y. M. C. A. supplies was handled by its motor transport service. But here again there were frequent disappointments. Two hundred motor cars lay on the docks in New York for many months awaiting transportation. Three large purchases of trucks, long needed by the Association, were made in England only to be commandeered by military necessity. And of course the constant shifting of army units made this motor transportation a critical problem for the "Y."

Yet the railroads carried a vast amount of canteen supplies and equipment. They hauled more than 1,000 car-loads per month. During October, 1918, as an instance, the records show 765 cars of general supplies, eighty-six cars of flour, 148 cars of sugar, 150 cars of tobacco, fifty-nine cars of chocolate, sixty-three cars of raw materials for manufacture, and 144 cars of lumber and hut materials.

The shipments handled by the traffic department of the Y. M. C. A. in France, June, 1918, to January, 1919, inclusive, including equipment and supplies, as well as merchandise sold in the canteens, were as follows:

| | | | | | Valuation | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| June..1918 | 593 | cars | trans., | Fr. | 38,545,000 | |
| July.. " | 837 | " | " | " | 54,405,000 | |
| August " | 916 | " | " | " | 59,540,000 | |
| Sept.. " | 954 | " | " | " | 62,010,000 | |
| Oct... " | 1465 | " | " | " | 95,225,000 | |
| Nov.. " | 1219 | " | " | " | 79,235,000 | |
| Dec... " | 1467 | " | " | " | 95,255,000 | |
| Jan. 1919 | 1187 | " | " | " | 77,155,000 | |
| | 8636 | | | | 561,370,000 | ($101,046,000) |
| Monthly average | 1080 | " | " | " | 70,171,250 | ($ 12,630,825) |

The business system of the Army Y. M. C. A. was supervised by The Price-Waterhouse Company of New York, the largest accounting firm in America. A member of the firm was in Paris in immediate charge of all overseas accounts.

Major-General James Harbord, Chief of Staff and later Chief of the Service of Supply, declared, in substance, to Mr. Elwood Brown, Senior Physical Director:

"I was one of the committee of officers to whom the question of the canteen was first referred in August, 1917, and I was the only man on the committee who voted against giving it to the Y. M. C. A. I

did this, not because I was unfriendly or lacked confidence in the organization, but because I was its friend and did not want to see it undertake something which would bring it into difficulties. After all that, however, I want to say that the Association has handled it far better than the Army itself or any other agency would have done."

Some weeks after the armistice, when enlisted men had again become available for canteen service, the Y. M. C. A. proposed turning the Post Exchange back to the army. General Pershing's letter in accepting the transfer from Mr. Carter, the managing head of the "Y" in France, follows:

"As you correctly state, the Y. M. C. A. undertook the management of the post exchanges at my request at a time when it was of the greatest importance that no available soldier should be taken away from the vital military functions of training and fighting. As the reasons which impelled me at that time to request you to undertake this work no longer exist, I am glad to approve of your suggestion. In reaching this conclusion, consideration has been given to the new burdens that you have assumed. I have accordingly given directions that the army units themselves take over and operate their own post exchanges.

"In making this change, permit me to thank you for the very valuable services and assistance which

the Y. M. C. A. has rendered to the American Expeditionary Force in handling these exchanges. Handicapped by a shortage of tonnage and land transportation, the Y. M. C. A. has by extra exertion served the army better than could have been expected, and you may be assured that its aid has been a large factor in the final great accomplishment of the American Army."

*The Educational System* built up during the war by the Y. M. C. A. was greatly expanded when hostilities ceased. This was one of the "new burdens" referred to by General Pershing.

The survey of the educational needs of the army was made by Anson Phelps Stokes, Jr., of Yale University. The system was headed by a Y. M. C. A. Army Educational Commission composed of John Erskine of Columbia, Chairman; Frank E. Spaulding, Superintendent of Schools in Cleveland; and Kenyon L. Butterfield, President of Massachusetts Agricultural College. Schools were opened in camps, posts, and hospitals, based on their educational needs. An expenditure of $2,000,000 for text books alone was made, and 600 prominent educators were brought into the work.

By order of General Pershing an American Army University was established at Beaune, to

accommodate from 15,000 to 20,000 soldier students; and at the same time the main office of the Y. M. C. A. Army Educational Commission was moved from Paris to Beaune. Colonel Ira L. Reeves was appointed military commander at the school. Three months' courses in engineering, liberal and fine arts, and science were arranged for soldiers unable to attend European Universities.

Mr. William Sloane, Chairman of the National War Work Council of the Association, announced in the spring of 1919 that the entire educational system, valued at $4,000,000, had been presented to the army without cost. Both the Secretary of War and General Pershing in accepting the transfer took occasion heartily to commend the Y. M. C. A. for the extraordinary development of this important work.

*Athletics and Recreation* were promoted together with this educational program. With the beginning of its work in France the Y. M. C. A. brought from the United States several hundred expert athletic directors to organize athletic training and contests for the various military units. From July to November, 1918, $829,000 worth of athletic supplies were sent

overseas. During the year 1918 and up to April 1, 1919, the "Y" had provided over 2,250,000 articles of athletic equipment. More than 100 athletic fields were in use; hundreds of thousands of soldiers participated; and the spectators in 1918 numbered 9,000,000.

Recreation centres were established for the American soldiers, that they might have wholesome entertainment when on furlough. The French soldier was in his own land, the British only a day from home; but the American was in a strange land far from home. The Y. M. C. A. endeavoured to furnish the American home spirit in a foreign country; and the men on furlough could choose between mountain, country, and seashore resorts. Here the Association sought to bring the soldiers under the influence of the finest type of American womanhood, under the supervision of Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr. The officers and men who visited these leave areas can best tell America how well the "Y" succeeded. There were accommodations for over 50,000 men at over thirty such centres in operation; notably Aix-les-Bains, Nice, Cannes, Monte Carlo, and Chamonix. Here, in addition to all kinds of sports and en-

tertainments, the men were taken on automobile trips, river and lake excursions, walking trips for sightseeing. The "Y" operated a great many hotels throughout France and England, which were always crowded to capacity. There were two hotels for officers and three for enlisted men in Paris; and similar accommodations at Bordeaux, Tours, Le Havre, Brest, St. Nazaire, Dijon, Nancy, Langres; and thirteen in and near Coblenz with the army of occupation.

Furnishing amusements to the soldiers in all parts of France was a gigantic task. Motion picture entertainments were furnished free to an extent that could be duplicated in America only at a box office income of millions of dollars. They involved the display of 4,000,000 feet of film to a nightly audience of 300,000 men. With combat divisions, portable machines were sent on trucks from village to village. One hundred and fifty theatrical companies were recruited in the United States and sent overseas by the Y. M. C. A. to entertain the soldiers; and there were many lecturers and individual entertainers. Their variety and quality is suggested by such names as E. H.

Sothern, George Randolph Chester, Irvin Cobb, Winthrop Ames, Margaret Deland, Elsie Janis, Sir Arthur Priestly, Walter Damrosch, John Craig, William T. Ellis, Hughes Le Roux, Reginald Wright Kauffman, Vance Thompson, Miss Margaret Wilson.

The men were encouraged to develop their own amateur entertainments. Professional coaches were provided, hundreds of one-act plays and costumes without number were supplied. Under "Y" guidance the best of this amateur talent was enjoyed not only in their own organizations, but throughout all France.

*The Y. M. C. A. Huts* thus linked the soldiers to their homes. Here writing paper was given away at the rate of 10,000,000 sheets a week, costing $39,000; and three-fourths of the letters to their homes were written by the soldiers on paper bearing the familiar Red Triangle. Here they were constantly reminded of their duty to keep in touch with their loved ones in America. Through the free service of the Y. M. C. A. they sent home 329,892 cash remittances, totalling more than $20,104,080. This home spirit prevailed, whether the "hut" were a regulation

wooden structure, an abandoned building, a dugout, a canvas tent, a thoroughly equipped city hotel, or a sixteenth century palace.

Specially designed huts were erected in all suitable places. Type A, single hut, 144 feet by 30 feet, with tables and benches, cost 60,000 francs. Type B, double hut, 180 feet by 90 feet, cost 90,000 francs. The smaller "Adrian Barracks" cost 20,000 francs. The French abri tent of double-lined canvas, put up when lumber was not accessible, cost from 3,000 to 7,000 francs. Many of these regulation huts were manufactured at the Association factories in France. They were of the knock-down type, shipped in numbered sections and quickly assembled by an eager force of soldier helpers. The "Y" had its own floating gang of Serbian labourers, who did much of the erecting and dismantling of huts. Well over 600 buildings were constructed by the Association; about the same number were leased; and over 800 centres were maintained in tents and army buildings. On May 1, 1919, there were 1,935 units of the Y. M. C. A. operating in France, with 2,770 centres.

The larger type hut required an equipment con-

sisting of over 1,040 articles—including piano, phonograph, stoves, lights, decorations, chairs, brooms, basins, towels, Bibles, tobacco cutters, percolators, checkers, chess, knives, forks, spoons, blankets, blotters. They contained libraries which totalled 5,000,000 bound volumes, 4,000,000 pamphlets, 2,000,000 magazines and countless newspapers, and 1,000,000 song books.

*Religious Programs* under the guidance of religious directors, all working under the supervision of President Henry Churchill King, of Oberlin College, were carried out in these centres and through the army generally, to a degree which in every case was conditioned by the location and activities of the army units. Eminent religious workers of America were brought to France as special lecturers; notably Rev. Harry Emerson Fosdick, Bishop Charles Henry Brent, Rev. Alexander McGaffin, Rev. Maitland Alexander, Bishop Luther B. Wilson, Dr. Harry N. Dascomb. All of the regular secretaries who had had any training or experience along these lines were directed to do their share in teaching and speaking. The attendance at Bible classes and religious services was en-

tirely voluntary, and they were totally free from sectarian bias.

The Y. M. C. A. looked upon all of its great and varied task as applied religion—the religion of comradeship, the religion of a friendly hand upon the shoulder. And there are no statistics available, no money values conceivable, for the thousands of quiet personal talks between soldiers in their homesickness, uncertainties, and distresses, and conscientious representatives of the Red Triangle.

Every "Y" secretary sought to go among the soldiers, as the Master among the men of the East, "as one who serves." And all of them together constituted the most expansive, most practical, most virile example of applied brotherhood the world has ever seen. Thousands of men from every profession—only a small percentage formerly Y. M. C. A. secretaries—toiling day and night to uphold in body, mind, and spirit (the Red Triangle) our fighting men, and thus stiffen their morale. In château, hut, dugout, or front line trench; by magazines, tobacco, chocolate bars, songs, words of cheer the Association worked. Its program was so huge, so dynamic, so self-sac-

rificing that to-day "the business of being a brother to men" means something new to the world.

The operation of this practical Christian program has been sketched in a letter by Rev. Maitland Alexander, D. D., serving as the Y. M. C. A. Religious Work Director with the American Army of Occupation, Coblenz, Germany. In writing of one evening's rounds of the Y's activities he says: "I have just come from Festival Hall. I went into the library of ten thousand volumes under the educational department of the Y. M. C. A. and the room was full of doughboys reading quietly. I went into the restaurant where eight hundred doughboys were having free dinner at one time. I went into the social hall where there were four very tired-looking Y. M. C. A. girls dancing with about two hundred and fifty not tired soldiers. I went into the music hall where two thousand five hundred soldiers were looking at a show called the 'Live Wires.' I saw the money exchange and the home remittance counter crowded with those doing business. I went to the mothers' corner where fifteen or twenty boys were telling their troubles to the Festival

Hall Mother, Mrs. Kency, whose popularity is so great that the boys cut their buttons off so as to ask her to sew them on and get a chance to talk. I went to the lounge where there were at least five hundred soldiers listening to a string orchestra and writing their home letters.

"All the above under one roof, all free and all managed by the Y. M. C. A. Next Sunday night there will be twenty-five hundred men at church there, and a big Bible class Sunday morning. There are lots of things which ought not to happen, and for which the Y. M. C. A. is to blame, but the work for the army is wonderful when one thinks how hard it is to do for the army and how difficult the army makes it.

"I think some comparison of activities is interesting too. There are ten Salvation Army people doing a good work. There are about sixty Knights of Columbus here in the Third Army. There are four Jewish Welfare Workers in this army, and about thirty-five Red Cross women and ten men. If the Y. M. C. A. were removed there would not be much welfare work. We have over four hundred men and women working in this army. We have fifteen

amusement units that give shows. We have about six movie outfits in each division. I have religious speakers making four addresses nearly every day, and have distributed a hundred thousand hymnals, ten thousand Testaments, five thousand single Gospels and tens of thousands of pieces of miscellaneous religious literature. This is some job."

The effect of this service and fellowship upon the morale of the army is reflected in the testimony of those who have fought in other wars, in which there was no Red Triangle. General Pershing, Marshal Foch, General Petain, Admiral Sims are among those who have given the Y. M. C. A. the highest commendation. General Pershing has endorsed the sentiment of one of his colonels: "Give me 900 men and the 'Y' rather than 1,000 men without the 'Y.'" And he has declared:

"A sense of obligation for the varied and useful service rendered to the army in France by the Young Men's Christian Association prompts me to join in the appeal for its further financial support. I have had opportunity to observe its operations, the quality of its personnel, and mark its beneficial influence upon our troops, and I

wish unreservedly to commend its work for the army."

And from the soldier's view-point:

"When your billet is a barnyard and your bed is crawling hay,
When it's raining and you're out of luck and (likely) out of pay,
When the only girl you want to see's a million miles away—
What's the answer, Kid?
The Answer is the old Y. M. C. A.!

"If it wasn't for the friendly Huts they run up overnight,
Where a guy can find some smokes and make a place to read or write,
Or maybe see a picture-show or watch a ten-round fight,
Why, Kid, we'd all go dippy before we end it right!

"But don't you lose no sleep about our funking any scrap!
For your wise old Uncle Sammy knows the way to treat a chap,
When he's half-the-world from Homeland, is to dot the muddy map
With snappy Red Triangles where the U. S. A.'s on tap.

"They treat you like you'd ought to be, they treat you like a man;

They don't make no distinctions, and they don't put any ban
On a guy who's never signed his name to no Salvation Plan—
You're good enough for them if you're a good American.

"But believe me, Kid, there's times—well, take my case the other day,
When a whiz-bang kind of shook me up and made me wonder—say,
When you have to talk to some one, and you don't know how to pray—
What's the answer, Kid?
The Answer is the old Y. M. C. A.!"

—Lee Wilson Dodd.

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